Tamil TIMES

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"I do not agree with a word of what you say, but I'll defend to the death your right to say it."

– Voltaire

★ Karunanidhi Rebuts Charges of Pro-LTTE Activities

★ Ex-Home Secretary in Custody – Implicates DMK Leader

★ Forging 'Pure Tamil' Nationalism

Former Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, M. Karunanidhi

★ The War Against Historical Memory

★ Sailing into Trouble'

★ Will India Seek Prabhakaran's Extradition

★ SAARC Summit to Reconvene

★ Sovereignty & Human Rights

★ UNP Rebels Lose Court Battle

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A GRATUITOUS INTERVENTION

Sri Lanka today is afflicted by rampant corruption and nepotism, proliferating prostitution and ever increasing drug-peddling. They are those sections of society enjoying the patronage of those in authority that employ questionable and illegal means to satisfy their insatiable greed to amass wealth no matter what happens to the rest of society. Arbitrary and senseless deprivation of human life has become almost a national pastime in recent years. All these matters concern the moral health of the people and the country. In this context one would have expected the estimated 25,000 Buddhist priests in the country to have mounted a crusade on these issues to regenerate the moral health of the nation. One has not seen any evidence of such a campaign either in the past or at present.

However, time and again, one has been able to see some leading, influential and powerful members of the Buddhist clergy pontificating, protesting and demonstrating in regard to questions relating to politics and ethnic relations in the country. Their pontifications, protestations and demonstrations have not been about bringing peace and harmony among the different communities, but their stand on most questions concerning ethnic and religious relations has been to initiate, instigate and exacerbate ethnic and religious disharmony and dissension. All their actions have been in the name of preserving the nation, language and religion – the Sinhala nation, the Sinhala language and the Buddhist religion. Theirs has not been a message of peace, harmony, tolerance and compassion, but one of ethnocentric arrogance and religious bigotry.

If there is any single group in Sri Lanka which has contributed the greatest to plunge the country into the tragic conflict we have been witnessing for the last several decades, that must be those sections of the Buddhist clergy which have been engaged in the crusade to 'save the nation, language and the religion'. It is they who have played havoc in preventing every government from settling the problem by peaceful negotiations. The people had faith and confidence in them because of their position in the religious sphere. But what they did in fact was to abuse that trust and confidence to mislead them into developing intransigent and intolerant attitudes. It is no exaggeration to say that it was the natural and inevitable consequence of their messages that induced their followers into violent responses resulting in frequent anti-Tamil pogroms.

Thankfully, these sections of the Buddhist clergy were pushed into the background by force of circumstances during the last two to three years. However there are strong signals that they are making a menacing comeback in recent months, and at a time when most people have realised the injustices perpetrated on the minorities in the past and are becoming more convinced about seeking a negotiated peaceful solution to the problem, the re-emergence of these forces is not only lamentably unwelcome but also positively dangerous. The recent intervention by the Advisory and Working Committee for Buddhasasana Affairs (all Buddhist monks) with a document addressed to the President is a case in point. These exalted prelates are reported to have advised President Premadasa that any solution to the ethnic crisis should not hinder the unity, sovereignty and the territorial integrity of Sri Lanka; the North and East should not be identified or accepted as the traditional homeland of the Tamils; the North and East should not be merged; all policies on land should be handled by the Central Government; and the maintenance of law and order, armed forces, all harbours and airports should be vested in the Central Government. It is hard to see how the issues on which they have sought to intervene fit into the remit of 'Buddhasasana Affairs'. Nevertheless it must be recognised that it is this type of gratuitous intervention by Buddhist prelates which has had the effect of inflaming opinion against any settlement based on what the minorities consider as their legitimate aspirations.

If President Premadasa is to avoid the fate that befell his predecessors in having taken these type of monks seriously, and if he is really genuine about creating his oft-repeated version of a multi-ethnic, multi-religious society and bringing about a resolution of the ethnic conflict, before it is too late he ought to make it clear to the monks of his Advisory Committee to confine themselves to Buddhasasana Affairs.

Will India Seek Prabhakaran's Extradition?

The prestigious Indian fortnightly *India Today* (15.12.91) reports that the Special Investigating Team (SIT) is 'considering issuing warrants against LTTE supremo V. Pirabhakaran, intelligence chief Pottuamman, ideologue Baby Subramaniam, among others, for plotting to kill Rajiv Gandhi. This will be followed by a request to Colombo to extradite these rebels'.

Already the special court presided over by judge S.M. Siddick designated to hear the Rajiv assassination case has issued a proclamation directing Pottu Amman, David, Daniel, Dilipan, Ravi and Santhan, alleged by the police to belong to the LTTE, to surrender before the court by November 11.

Confessions by those already in custody and available forensic evidence are reported to have established that many of the members of the squad that was involved in the plot and the carrying out of the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi on 21 May 1991 were previously engaged in the murder on 19 June 1990 of EPRLF leader K. Padmanabha and 14 of his colleagues.

Up to now, none of the reports published by the Indian media had made a direct 'evidential link' between the LTTE leader Prabhakaran and the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi. But, quoting SIT sources, the *India Today* report states that at least two documents they have unearthed would 'prove that the assassination was ordered by Pirabhakaran'. The first document is reported to be a letter dated 10 May 1991 written by Dhanu, the belt-bomb-suicide assassin to Prabhakaran from a LTTE hide-out in Kodungaiyur. This letter while containing detailed particulars of her successful dry-run (a rehearsal) at the meeting held in Madras and addressed by the then Prime Minister V.P. Singh, also thanks Prabhakaran for entrusting her with the **'important task'**.

The second document is a letter dated 7 September 1991 reportedly addressed to Prabhakaran by Peria Santhan (alias Gundu Santhan) who committed suicide by biting the cyanide pill when police surrounded the house at Navalpattu in Tiruchi on November 13. This letter, which was recovered by the police at Rameshwaram when an alleged LTTE courier, Irumpuri, was apprehended, inter alia, stated:

My dear elder brother,

I am writing this letter amidst crisis. But we have not lost confidence. The CBI seems to have come to know everything about us following the arrest of so many of our members. All Pottuamman's boys got nabbed and that eventually led to the death of Raguvaran (Sivarasan)...The arrest of Chinna Santhan helped the CBI to know about who killed Padmanabha...

After seeing so many arrests, I had to distribute cyanide to all our boys... As a result of my instructions/order, 25 of us have died. The situation here is just like what it was in Jaffna during the IPKF operation. Like our people hated to give the Indian soldiers water, the same treatment is being meted out to our activists.

I suggest that we have a smaller team to work here. I have waited several nights ... no boat has come ... how do I send goods ? After the death of Rajiv, we were promised that boats will come once the election was over. But no boat came...

Send boats and wireless sets before some more of us get caught. If I get a wireless set, we can identify the arrival or the departure point. The arrest of Varathan cut off my last link with you. Pottuamman's boys do not carry my message to you... The likely arrest of Kolatur Maniyam is worrying me as that would lead to many other Indians. The CBI cannot catch me. Have faith in me.

Yours

Santhan

Further Military Offensive in Jaffna

9 December – As we go to press reports are coming in that the armed forces have begun a major military thrust in northern Jaffna peninsula. From the Palali airbase which is the biggest armed forces camp in the north, it is reported that troops are making sustained efforts in the face of fierce resistance by the Tigers to expand their area of control.

As the army offensive is accompanied by frequent bombing raids by attack aircraft, strafing by helicopter gunships and shelling from naval gunboats, considerable civilian casualties and destruction of property are being reported. Thousands of residents of the affected areas are continuing to abandon their homes and are said to be moving towards Jaffna town.

Before the offensive began, the armed forces had control of the Palali airbase and adjoining areas including Kankesanthurai towards the seashore and Vasavilan on the opposite side. It is said that the Tigers have been using their newly acquired anti-aircraft guns to prevent the landing and taking off of aircraft from the Palali airbase. Aerial mobility for the armed forces is vital for they control very little territory within the peninsula despite their reported recent successes by the security forces. The latest offensive, therefore, would appear to be directed at gaining control of as wide an area as possible around the airbase and to destroy the anti-aircraft positions of the Tigers. While the armed forces have claimed to have inflicted heavy casualties among the Tigers and reported to be advancing towards securing the areas around Myliddy, Valalai and Thondamanaru, the Tigers have dismissed these claims as fanciful.

Even before the latest offensive, during the period from the end of the third week of November, round the clock curfew was clamped down all over Jaffna which was subjected to incessant bombing and naval shelling operations in an obvious attempt to disrupt the Heroes Week celebrations organised by the LTTE.

Meanwhile, having established their hold on the offshore islands of Jaffna the government has called upon the residents who had left these islands to return to their homes with a promise of an amnesty for returning Tiger supporters.

Shortages of food, medicines and other commodities essential to the life of the civilian population within the peninsula have become acute and a considerable number of people are driven to starvation. Even the transport of meagre supplies to the peninsula through the good offices of the International Committee of the Red Cross has been severely disrupted by the continuing military operations.

No Surrender Says Yogi

Yogaratnam Yogi, one of the top leaders of the LTTE, in a recent broadcast over the 'Voice of Tigers' radio said that Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Jayalalitha Jayaram and former Chief Minister Muthuvelu Karunanidhi were accusing each other saying that they had helped the LTTE in Tamil Nadu, but neither of them had helped the LTTE. It was the former Chief Minister, M.G. Ramachandran who had helped the LTTE and gave all possible assistance.

Yogi accused Karunanidhi who earlier stood for a separate state in Tamil Nadu of giving up that stand once he got into pow-

er. He accused the AIADMK members of turning against the LTTE for the sake of their own political survival.

Rejecting the call by the army to surrender, Yogi said that the LTTE would never surrender to the Sri Lankan armed forces. 'We never surrendered to the mighty Indian forces. We carried on our fight when the huge Indian army was standing at every door step in the peninsula. Our cadres showed maximum determination by living through hardships and even skipping meals for days. Therefore, we would not surrender to the Sri Lankan armed forces even though we have been surrounded'.

Monks set out terms for ethnic solution

Buddhist monks on the Advisory and Working Board for Buddhasasana affairs have laid down five conditions the Government should consider in its efforts to resolve the ethnic crisis.

In a document submitted to the President they state that any solution to the ethnic crisis should not hinder the unity, sovereignty and the territorial integrity of Sri Lanka. The North and East should not be identified or accepted as the traditional homeland of the Tamils. The North and East should not be merged. All policies on land should be handled by the Central Government and the maintenance of law and order, the armed forces, all harbours and airports should be vested in the Central Government.

The monks state adherence to these conditions would provide equal rights to all the people of Sri Lanka. They insist that the equal distribution of the resources among all communities be the basis of any decentralisation.

The monks have reminded the President of proposals they made at the All Party Conference initiated by former President J.R. Jayewardene and how the Tamil parties positively responded to them.

The document states that at that time, the solution was based on decentralization of power on District Development Council level and with the introduction of the 13th Amendment, decentralization was limited to Provincial Councils.

SAARC Summit in Late December

The sixth SAARC Summit, will be held in Colombo on December 21, according to senior government officials in Colombo.

They said that, although the Heads of State meeting will be confined to a single day, the full itinerary of the Summit programme will be worked out. The visiting Heads of State are expected to stay in the country for at least three days, the officials said.

They added that the earlier programme that was drawn up for the cancelled Summit, will remain unchanged. The visiting Heads of State are expected to participate in the entire programme the officials said.

The Heads of State from Bhutan, India, Nepal, Pakistan, Bangladesh and the Maldives have informed the current chairman of SAARC President Maumoon Abdul Gayoom, that they would attend the December 21 Summit in Colombo.

They also added that the visiting leaders are likely to attend the South Asian Federation (SAF) Games, which will be in progress during this period.

According to the officials, Colombo has decided to cut down on pomp and pageantry owing to the tight schedule and the lack of time. The visiting Heads of State are scheduled to arrive in Colombo on December 20, and will be escorted to the Hotel Taj Samudra under maximum security.

The Sixth SAARC Summit, which was scheduled to be held in Colombo in early November this year was postponed at the eleventh hour, when the King of Bhutan, Jigmye Singe Wanchuk, announced his non-availability for the meeting owing to internal strife in his country. India later refused to attend the Summit, saying the SAARC charter required all the leaders of the seven nations to be present for a summit to be convened.

Break-Through by Mid-January

President Ranasinghe Premadasa has not shown 'a green or red light' to his efforts to intervene and bring about a solution to the North-East problem, Mr. Saumyamoorthy Thondaman, Minister of Rural Industrial Development and tourism, said in a recent press interview.

But the Minister was confident that a solution could be evolved by the middle of next month.

Mr. Thondaman said although the leaders of the SLFP, MEP and SLMC had not assured their full support for his peace mission those parties were very keen about bringing peace to the troubled north-east region.

When asked whether President Ranasinghe Premadasa had given the green light for his peace initiative to the Tigers, Mr. Thondaman said: 'He had not shown the green light or red light'.

Referring to recent newspaper articles against his proposals to the Tigers, the Minister said some people, particularly in the press, were jealous of him. 'This is because they think, this man, Thondaman, just sits in his office room and finds solutions to various crucial problems', he said. He said some people in the press try to 'put me against the government'.

The Minister said everyone who was interested in the well-being and prosperity of Sri Lanka as a single nation would support a plan which could bring permanent peace to the country.

When asked for his views on recent news reports from Jaffna quoting a Tiger leader that peace talks could begin soon, Mr. Thondaman said: 'I am hopeful a breakthrough will be made by Thai Pongal. Don't be in a hurry. Wait till mid-January'.

Chandrika Joins SLFP

Leader of the Bahujana Nidahas Peramuna Mrs. Chandrika Kumaranatunga and 16 members of the party's politburo have obtained membership in the Sri Lanka Freedom Party.

They were given membership on SLFP leader, Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike and party acting Secretary Dharmasiri Senanayake accepting BJP's application to join SLFP at branch level.

It is learnt that among politburo members who joined the SLFP along with Mrs. Kumaranatunga are Rathnasiri Wickramanayake, (BJP Vice President), Salinda Dissanayake, Reginald Cooray, Mahinda Senanayake, Sisira Bandara Senaratne, Dr. Raja Wijetunga, W.A. Abeysinghe, Gunasinghe Suriyapperuma, Shantha Premaratne, Ananda Moonasinghe, Susil Premasinghe, P.S. Gunawardena and Ajith Jinadasa.

Papers conferring SLFP membership on three members have been personally handed over by Mrs. Bandaranaike at her residence at Rosmead Place. Acting Secretary Senanayake has been present on the occasion.

Mrs. Kumaranatunga and her late husband Vijaya Kumaranatunga along with Ossie Abeygoonasekera, T.B. Illangaratne and several others broke away from the SLFP in 1984 and formed the Sri Lanka Mahajana Pakshaya.

Later Mrs. Kumaranatunga and several others left SLMP and formed the BJP.

SLFP sources said the party's National Organiser Anura Bandaranaike also has accepted the entry of the BJP members. They said Mrs. Kumaranatunga might be given a key post in the SLFP.

People & Politics

★ UNP Rebels Lose Court Battle

The Supreme Court judgment upholding the expulsion of the eight ruling United National Party (UNP) dissidents was, for Sri Lankan President Ranasinghe Premadasa, another victory in the long chain of events set in motion by the impeachment resolution slapped on him in late August. For the dissidents led by Lalith Athulathmudali and Gamini Dissanayake however it is a set back. What they were hoping for was to be able to remain in the party, topple the President and bring about a restructuring of the party.

The dissidents had challenged their expulsion by the Working Committee of the UNP. In consequence of the judgment, not only have they lost the party membership, but also lost their seats in parliament which they hoped to use as a platform in their anti-Premadasa campaign.

The day following the court order, the UNP dissidents announced that they had formed a new political party called the Democratic United National Front (DUNF) and claimed that the new organisation already had a membership of 48,000 and that several thousands more were expected to join. Lalith Athulathmudali also claimed that some of the government MPs who were signatories to the impeachment resolution and later retracted and pledged support to the President would soon join the new party. This could probably happen in the event of some of them, yet to be identified, losing their portfolios in the Cabinet reshuffle expected shortly. It is understandable for President Premadasa to rid himself of persons in whom he has lost faith. Although he was forced to accept their excuse that they were signatories to the resolution through 'misrepresentation', Premadasa can't forget or dismiss the fact that they signed the resolution. At a time when Premadasa's own political survival depends on the support he could muster for himself among government MPs, he had no choice but to accept their 'explanation'. Now however that the impeachment resolution is behind him and the dissidents expelled, he will no doubt want to ensure that his cabinet and the parliamentary team comprises men whose loyalty will never be in question. It is rumoured that at least ten MPs have been earmarked for 'disciplinary action', and already two more UNP MPs, Ariyaratne Jayatilake and S.A. Muthu Banda have been expelled by the Working Committee of the party. Thus a period of expulsions from the ruling party and replacement by Premadasa loyalists is predictable.

The new DUNF is expected to continue with their much publicised island-wide public meetings. Athulathmudali announced that the new party would form a trade union centre, women and youth organisations under its auspices and also start publishing a party newspaper shortly. 'We will walk from village to village and from town to town campaigning for the policies of the new party', said Athulathmudali.

The dissidents have also expressed fear of 'threats, attacks and other forms of intimidation'. Some weeks ago, a grenade attack was made on one of their meetings and many were injured. Athulathmudali and Gamini Dissanayake have complained of a series of acts of victimisation against their supporters. In fact one of the UNP rebels, Mr. Lakshman Seneviratne who was a State Minister, is presently facing charges of involvement in a murder alleged to have occurred in 1989. The police who carried out investigations then would appear to have 'closed the file for lack of evidence'. The case has now been resurrected with the authorities claiming that they have 'discovered fresh evidence' in regard to the ex-State Minister's involvement! Within 24 hours of losing his seat in Parliament, Mr. Seneviratne was taken into custody on 5 December and has been remanded in custody pending further proceedings. In parliament, Anura Bandaranaike alleged that Dr. Wickrema Weerasooriya was being politically victimised because he was the brother-in-law of Gamini Dissanayake. The police had carried out an unauthorised search of Dr. Weerasooriya's house when he was abroad and that his land at Mirigama in which over fifty persons were employed was now being acquired by the government 'for a public purpose' and this was pure political revenge.

However there is the prospect of the DUNF closing ranks with other opposition parties, particularly the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) which has 67 MPs in the parliament who provided the substantial majority of the signatures to the anti-Premadasa impeachment resolution. Already there are reports of negotiations between the leaders of both these parties in an endeavour to mobilise mass support to bring an end to the Presidential system of government.

★ Chandrika's Home-coming

In the meantime, predictable though it was, Chandrika Wijekumaratunga's long awaited and much publicised homecoming into the SLFP fold has at last occurred accompanied by the now familiar squabbles among members of the Bandaranaike family who see the SLFP not as a political party but as an inheritance bequeathed by the late S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike to them to be fought over. Son Anura, whose ambition was somewhat assuaged by being appointed the National Organiser of the party has been waiting impatiently and in vain for his mother, the aged Mrs. Srima Bandaranaike, to dethrone herself from the leadership of the party so that he himself could assume the mantle of his late father. But the mother has been clinging on to her position egged on by her Ratwatte brothers not to let go control of the party for they know that their influence over the party also will disappear with her departure.

The long-running mother-son quarrel reached its peak recently when Mrs. Bandaranaike engineered a coup to topple the General Secretary of the party Mr. Sooriyaperuma when son Anura was away from the island. Anura who regards himself as the natural heir to his father's inheritance saw in this move a plot by the Ratwatte gang to undermine his influence in the party and he launched a fierce open war against his mother accusing her of dictatorial behaviour and absence of intra-party democracy. To avert an imminent crisis as a stop-gap arrangement. Mr. Dharmasiri Senanayake was appointed acting General Secretary and Mr. Sooriyaperuma was kicked upstairs to the powerless position of Vice-President, and a Peace Committee comprising Kingsley Wickremaratne, Lakshman Jayakody, Mahinda Rajapakse and C.V. Gooneratne was appointed to draw up a plan for the resolution of the leadership issue.

Having had what is described as 'intense discussions' with Mrs. Bandaranaike and Anura Bandaranaike, the Peace Committee produced a formula: Mrs. Bandaranaike would be party leader while Anura would be elected party President with full powers, subject to the qualification that the President should consult the party leader on all major decisions, and any disagreement between them should be referred to the Central Committee; with the adoption of this formula, Mrs. Chandrika Wijayakumaratunga and her group should be admitted to the SLFP provided they dissolved their party, the Bahujana Nidhahas Party (BNP).

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CRM on Sovereignty and Human Rights

The securing of human rights must be an integral part of any discussion about possible forms of government and devolution, the Civil Rights Movement has said.

In a statement, the CRM points out that the legal doctrine of the sovereignty of states has been the subject of a revolution in international law, so far as human rights are concerned. Today, a state is bound by international law to secure the fundamental rights and liberties of its subjects, and its performance in this regard is the legitimate concern of the rest of the world.

The CRM refers to current discussions on the 'Westminster' model versus the Executive Presidency, and on forms of devolution and federalism. It is important that the human rights factor be given its due place in such debates. Whatever the model of devolution, human rights must be effectively secured at every level, both within the devolved unit and at the centre, the CRM has stressed.

The central government must in turn make its own legislation subject to judicial review at all times, and not merely at the Bill stage as at present, it adds.

The CRM has said these steps should be taken by the Sri Lankan state for the benefit of all its people even if there were no ethnic problems. But they are all the more essential as part of any 'devolution package' as an expression of good faith and a reassurance against the centre acting oppressively. People of all ethnic groups and all political persuasions will welcome them as a guarantee of their fundamental rights against transgression by any governmental authority, be it central, provincial or district, present or future, the CRM state.

Furthermore, Sri Lanka must give any person who complains that his fundamental rights have been violated the possibility, as a last resort, to have recourse to an international tribunal. This could be done by signing the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and other like instruments.

A.I. Urges Extension of Commission's Terms

The Amnesty International has urged the government to extend the terms of the Presidential Commission of Inquiry on Involuntary Removal of Persons to include those cases which occurred prior to January 1991 as well as post January 1991 'as disappearances continue to be reported from all parts of the country.'

In a report on Sri Lanka titled 'Unresolved disappearances from the period 1987-1990, the case of Sevana Army Camp' A.I. states: 'Tens of thousands of people have reportedly "disappeared" in Sri Lanka after being detained by the security forces in recent years, yet the government has taken few steps to acknowledge responsibility publicly, to investigate the fate or whereabouts of the "disappeared", or to bring those responsible for "disappearances" to justice. Amnesty International believes that the government's lack of action over the years to curb "disappearances" and extra judicial executions committed by the security forces personnel confronting armed opposition has given the impression that the government condones these gross violations of human rights in certain situations'.

Thondaman on Talks With Rao

India has suggested to CWC leader and Minister S. Thondaman that the return of tens of thousands of Sri Lankan refugees from Tamil Nadu to North-east Sri Lanka be taken up at proposed negotiations with the LTTE.

He said Indian Prime Minister Narasimha Rao had proposed during talks in New Delhi that a central refugee camp be set up in Trincomalee to receive and re-settle the Sri Lankan refugees from Tamil Nadu.

The central camp was suggested because India felt that in the present circumstances it would not be possible for the refugees to return to their own villages.

Mr. Thondaman said he assured Mr. Rao that he would explore the possibilities of resettling the refugees soon but he could not give any specific timeframe.

Mr. Rao said the Sri Lankan refugee issue had become a major problem for Tamil Nadu Chief Minister, Jayalalitha Jeyaram who had asked New Delhi to take steps to settle this problem soon.

Referring to the recent crisis over the postponement of the South Asian Summit, Mr. Thondaman said India was disturbed over a statement made by Foreign Minister Harold Herat in Parliament. The Foreign Minister had used the word 'adamant' on India's stand regarding the Colombo summit. Mr. Rao pointed out that it was India which had originally proposed that the summit be held in Colombo.

'I do not know whether the media and the other groups made matters worse by exaggerating', Mr. Thondaman said on his return from New Delhi.

Mr. Thondaman said he explained in detail the proposals which he had put forward to the LTTE and Mr. Rao listened without comment.

Continued from page 6

However, on the same day as the above formula was being hammered out and apparently without the knowledge of the Peace Committee or the National Organiser, Anura Bandaranaike, Mrs. Bandaranaike got her daughter Chandrika and 15 others of her party to fill in their application forms and admitted them to the SLFP. Anura and those of the Peace Committee would appear to have come to know about their admission only through the columns of the newspapers the following day, and this episode has led to another round of infighting between the mother and son, the latter accusing the former of acting in 'gross violation of the party constitution' and the former telling the latter that she knew more about the constitution than her son.

Chandrika for her part has said that she is not aspiring for leadership within the SLFP and the mother has said that both her son and daughter should and could join hands and work together in the party founded by their late father. Whether the mother-son-daughter combination will 'live happily ever after' is a doubtful question given the long history of disputes that has plagued the SLFP in recent years.

During her previous political incarnation as co-leader of the SLMP before the brutal assassination of her husband, Wijayakumaratunga, by the JVP, and her subsequent stay abroad, Chandrika had adopted a progressive stance on the ethnic question in as much as she accepted the right of the Tamil people to self-determination, supported the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement between Rajiv Gandhi and J.R. Jayawardene and the establishment of Provincial Councils including the merger of the Northern and Eastern Provinces all of which were opposed by the SLFP leadership. Now that she has joined the SLFP, the question is whether she will accept the SLFP position on these issues or get the SLFP to change its policies to her way of thinking.

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Tigers Seek to Forge 'Pure Tamil' Nationalism

– by Taraki –

At a time when many people seem to take it for granted that the LTTE's military decline has begun and is inexorable, it would certainly be illuminating, even meagrely to examine the Tiger in its political context. The political-cultural space in which it desires to carve out a long lasting niche for itself, is no doubt Pan-Tamil nationalism. The Tiger has lost India's support for good. Delhi has expressed its determination to finish the LTTE. It has even gone to the extent of playing down its role as 'co-guarantor of Tamils' rights'. Therefore, inevitably the LTTE is driven to find for itself a political rearbase (its real rear base – technically speaking – in Tamilnadu is fairly smashed up) to ensure its long term survival.

However, marginal in its effect, it is Pan-Tamilian nationalism that the LTTE is cultivating now. If the Tiger were to succeed in this political ambition at least partially a battle won could well turn out to be a battle lost for Colombo and Delhi.

The D.K. leader Veeramani's decision to appear for the accused in the Rajiv Gandhi case and the Padmanabha case, is, for Prabhakaran a minor advancement in the right direction – Pan Tamilian solidarity.

Any Indian patriot would certainly dismiss it as insignificant. But when one considers the fact that Kumudham a popular Tamil magazine was editorially congratulating Veeramani recently for disowning party members and sympathisers involved in the Rajiv assassination case and called upon Karunanidhi to follow his example – a hint that the D.K. leadership has taken a difficult decision indeed, to appear for the accused in both cases.

The extreme nationalist sections had charged that he had been bribed by Jayalalitha to keep quiet (Kedayam – November issue). Earlier, when the LTTE was pursued as only a military phenomenon, trouble came from another quarter: India's so called geopolitics. It is being pursued once again only as a military phenomenon, to be defeated at some point, according to Mr. D. B. Wijetunge. This time the Tiger hopes to rise again on the bedrock of Pan-Tamilian sentiment, even marginally, whether the LTTE is justified in entertaining this hope, it is too early to say. But it will be useful, however to examine briefly Pan-Tamilian thoughts.

The culture of the post 1990 LTTE can be distinguished by two salient and essential festivals: Muthamizh Vizha and Maveerar Thinam. The former exalts the Tamil language, the latter 'the great warriors'. Prabhakaran, demonstrates his commitment to the ideals signified by these festivals, by appearing personally. Consequently, we find the LTTE promoting the use of pure Tamil – a Tamil 'purged' of words derived from Sanskrit, Pali and English and promoting a martial culture as the dominant component of Tamil culture.

What I intend to demonstrate here cursorily, is that these two ideals which are being promoted by the LTTE are the twin and interrelated ideals on which Pan-Tamilian ideology has been built from the latter part of the 19th century, and from which the D.K., D.M.K. and the A.D.M.K., arose. The project to purify the Tamil language of all non-Tamil, mainly Aryan elements, holds the key to the Dravidian movement's concept of history.

The history of the Tamil nation is seen as unfolding on the struggle between original Tamilian and Aryan represented by Brahminism. The Pure Tamil movement (institutionalized by Maraimalai Atikal) is posited on the belief that there was an original, Tamil language and culture, untainted by Aryan-Brahmin influences. This was taken up by the powerful pro-British non-Brahmin classes of the Madras Presidency who were resenting the disproportionate influence of the Brahmins in the Raj.

The Anglican missionary, Robert Caldwell, laid the theoretical foundation for the Dravidian ideology and Pure Tamil movement with the publication of his Comparative Grammar of the Dravidian languages where he claims that 'Tamil can readily dispense with the greater part or whole of sanskrit and by dispensing with it rises to a purer and more refined style'. (P.4) and that 'classical Tamil contains less Sanskrit, not more than the colloquial dialect. It affects purism and national independence and its refinements are all ab intra' (P.81). It should be noted that many Tamil scholars who subsequently wrote about the uniqueness of the Dravidian linguistic and cultural identity were sometimes encouraged by the British, who were becoming alarmed by the changing policy of the once docile Indian National Congress, which was dominated by Brahmin intelligentsia.

The Thanithamil (Pure Tamil) movement of Maraimalai Atikal and the South Indian Liberal Federation were born in the same year: 1916. The leadership of both organizations openly declared that the Tamil people should go their own way under British supervision and the best government 'directed by Providence' to rule over Tamils. The result of all this was the desire generated in the appropriate political climate – South Indian-Liberal Federation versus Congress. D.K. versus Congress, Hindi – of the Brahminism Dravidianism conflict, to discover the pristine Tamil-self; and what was this pristine Tamil-self that was discovered?

It was the warrior, totally devoted to war in the martial songs of Puranannooru, the earliest extant text of Tamil literature. What the Dravidian movement discovered as its original and untainted cultural self was a bloody, martial culture which exalted the cult of the warrior as its religion. The emphasis of most of these poems is on martial glory. (In the subsequent phases of Tamil history one finds ample evidence of Buddhism and Jainism which were the dominant religions among the Tamils for more than a thousand years, making diverse and constant efforts to suppress and sublimate this martial culture).

There were pious Tamil scholars who found it difficult to come to terms with this ferocious and bloody martial culture which they were unable to avoid in their search for the original Tamil self. Although many had in passing noticed in these songs a striking parallel with Greek and Teutonic heroic poetry, it was the Sri Lankan Tamil scholar Prof. K. Kailasapathy who established that the Puranannooru represented a heroic age and compared it with the martial bardic poetry found in other ancient warlike cultures.

The contents of Puranannooru suited the political agenda of the D.M.K. which was militant, secular and separatist in the fifties and the early sixties. The concept of the Puranannoottuth Thamilan was forged in this period. The DMK evolved an elaborate martial vocabulary for political action based on terms taken from the Puranannooru. Some usages peculiar to the warrior cult of these poems have found currency in modern Tamil usage as a result. The Dravidian movement in its most militant and hence most effective phase established the idea among the politically conscious Tamil nationalists that the martial trait was the most original characteristic of the Tamil people; that it was necessary to resurrect this trait (Thamil veeram) if the Tamils were to successfully struggle for liberation.

The first volume of Karunanidhi's autobiography and a large number of pro-DMK books work and expand on this theme. Novelists and poets glor-

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Former Home Secretary of T.N. in Custody

MADRAS, Nov. 21.

The former Home Secretary of Tamil Nadu, Mr. R. Nagarajan, was arrested today in connection with the Padmanabha murder case and two other cases involving the LTTE. He was taken into custody in the wee hours of today at his Ashoknagar residence and taken to Tiruchi.

Charged under Sections 3, 4, 5 and 6 of the Terrorists and Disruptive Activities (Prevention) Act (TADA), Mr. Nagarajan was arrested by the Superintendent of Police, Tiruchi, Mr. V. Jaganathan, in connection with the case relating to Anandaraj and Deivasigamani, nabbed in Tiruchi a few days ago. He has also been charged with involvement in the Padmanabha murder case and the gunning down of a TSP constable in Pattinamkathan, Ramanathapuram.

The police have charged Mr. Nagarajan with instructing a Deputy Commissioner of Police, Law and Order, Madras, not to pursue the Padmanabha killers and similarly two senior police officers not to go after the militants who gunned down the TSP constable and a civilian off Ramanathapuram in February 1990.

It is stated that both Anandaraj and Deivasigamani, recently nabbed in Tiruchi with gelatine sticks and explosives, have confessed that the former Home Secretary had 'harboured, aided and was instrumental in supporting the LTTE' and had 'encouraged the militants to store explosives in Thillainagar and other areas in Tiruchi, to smuggle them to Jaffna'.

Further, another LTTE militant Vicky alias Vigneswaran, and some others had also admitted that Mr. Nagarajan was 'very helpful' in their nefarious activities and 'extended full support to the LTTE for the operations in Tamil Nadu'.

Even as he sent in his papers for voluntary retirement from service, the State Government had earlier placed him under suspension, pending investigations into various charges of 'commission and omission'.

It is also considered significant, that the then Director General of Police, Mr. P. Dorai, who could have thrown more light on the charges against Mr. Nagarajan, died last Sunday. He retired from service in May this year.

Mr. K. Kasim, DIG of Police, Tiruchi and Mr. Jagannathan, Superintendent of Police told press persons today that evidence of a 'deeprooted network' of the LTTE establishment in Tamil Nadu with Tiruchi as the base, even prior to the murder of Padmanabha has come to light. The accused in the Padmanabha murder case went scot-free only with the help of this network 'actively supported and blessed by the top brass at Fort St. George.'

Questioned whether anyone above Mr. Nagarajan was involved the two militant supporters refused to name anybody but repeatedly answered that 'few more top brass in the bureaucracy and in the political arena' did support their movement. Mr. Kasim said the association of the former Home Secretary with these militants had been established. Asked about any evidence of financial assistance the DIG said, further investigations alone could unravel this. 'If only this deep rooted network of the LTTE militants and their links with bureaucrats prior to the Padmanabha murder case had not been allowed, perhaps the tragic assassination of late Prime Minister, Rajiv Gandhi could have been avoided,' Mr. Kasim said.

Further Detentions

MADRAS, Nov. 25.

A Madras City advocate Veerasekharan, was today taken into custody by the 'Q' branch on the charge that he aided and abetted militants of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam.

The arrest of the advocate, belonging to the Dravidar Kazhagam, followed seizure of a letter written by him to Peria Santhan. It was recovered from an LTTE militant, Vasanthan now in custody. (Peria Santhan committed suicide following a police raid on his hideout in Tiruchi recently).

In his letter, the advocate counselled Peria Santhan to be in his safe hideout as the Special Investigation Team, probing the Rajiv Gandhi assassination case, had given up its search for him thinking that he had escaped to Jaffna in Sri Lanka.

The letter was referred to the Forensic Science wing which, after comparing it with an anonymous letter written by Veerasekharan, gave the opinion that the author of both the letters was the same.

Mr. D. Veerasekharan, counsel for some of the accused in the Rajiv Gandhi assassination and Padmanabha murder cases, was today remanded to judicial custody till January 8, 1992 by Mr. S.M. Siddickk, judge of the designated court.

Mr. Siddickk earlier issued the warrant of arrest and the advocate was picked up from his residence of Triplicane here this morning on the charge of harbouring the accused in the Padmanabha murder case.

Other Arrests

Mr. T.V. Maduranayagam, another lawyer from Tiruchi has also been taken into custody. The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has

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ified this period when Tamil kings had imprinted their insignia on the Himalayas (a leit motif in Purananooru). 'He-chera king – inflicted such a crushing blow on the Aryans that they cried aloud in pain' says one poem. It is this political cultural matrix in which the DK, DMK and the ADMK have to articulate themselves.

Pan-Indian politics has not done much to dismantle this despite its desire to do so. The Great Heroes day said: 'We carry kavadi, we ring bells in temples and light lamps to gods. What did we gain. The feeling that we are Tamils should come first and religions second. We worship gods whom we have not seen. Why can't we remember and honour the valour of the warriors who lived among us? Why can't we light lamps and ring bells remembering the courage with which they fought?'

Poem 335 of Purananooru says: 'We have no gods who are worshipped with offerings of rice. We worship only the hero-stones of those who stood their ground against the hated enemy and were slain by war elephants with shining tusks.'

This is not to say that the Tigers have read and are influenced directly by the ancient Tamil martial texts, but to show how the components of the LTTE's martial culture have evolved from the broader Dravidian movement, and also how the elements of a heroic age can best describe the warrior cult promoted by the LTTE.

Kailasapathy's descriptions of the martial culture can also describe the sociology of the Mavearar Thinam. 'In such societies the deeds esteemed by men are those that call for courage and utter disdain for death. The true hero chooses to die in combat rather than live comfortably at home.'

These observations on ancient heroic societies in general and Purananooru society in particular is appropriate to the martial ethos that the Tiger is trying to rekindle or cultivate in Tamil society.

The concept of Tuilum Illam, a special crematorium for dead warriors constructed in V.V.T. and planned for other parts of Jaffna is a case in point. It is expected to be above the usual religious last rites: to create a new martial ritual for cremating the dead.

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charged that the execution of the kill-Padmanabha plot was discussed at a house rented by Maduranayagam. The RDX bombs used during the operation at Mr. Padmanabha's house were manufactured at this house in which Kiruban and Vicky alias Vigneshwaran were staying.

Also charged with involvement is V. Ravichandran, brother of the DMK Rajya Sabha MP, Mr. V. Gopalaswamy. Mr. Ravichandran is believed to have harboured Peria Santhan, who committed suicide in his Tiruchi hideout recently. Santhan's involvement in the Padmanabha massacre has been confirmed now. His fingerprints have matched the fingerprints found on the Maruti van and the Ambassador car that the killer squad had abandoned before escaping to Sri Lanka.

Among the nearly 30 persons arrested in connection with the killings are two Sri Lankans, Mr. Jaya Balasingam, and Mrs. Chandravadana both from Velvettithurai, the LTTE supremo, Mr. Prabhakaran's village.

The killer squad had stayed at Jaya Balasingam's house for 10 days before the massacre. The weapons used for the killing had also been stored in the same house. Mrs. Chandravadana has been charged with passing on information about the EPRLF cadre's movements to the killers. Mrs. Chandravadana, who was living near the EPRLF leader's flat, was directed to keep an eye on the comings and goings at the slain EPRLF leader's flat.

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Ex-Home Secretary Implicates Former C.M.

Madras, 30 November – The former Home Secretary of Tamil Nadu, Mr. R. Nagarajan, has in a voluntary statement made to a judicial magistrate implicated the leader of the DMK and former Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M. Karunanidhi for alleged growth and unchecked activities of the LTTE in the State.

Mr. Nagarajan was arrested on 21 November in connection with the case of the murder of the EPRLF leader Padmanabha and 14 of his colleagues and two other cases involving the LTTE. He has been charged under sections 3, 4, 5 and 6 of the Terrorists and Disruptive Activities (Prevention) Act (TADA).

In his 16-page typed statement given on oath before the Judicial 1 Class Magistrate of Tiruchi, Mr. Manoharan, Mr. Nagarajan is reported to have said that the real trouble started only because of the pro-LTTE policy of Karunanidhi. He pointed out that it was submitted orally by the law enforcing authorities to Karunanidhi that allowing the LTTE militants into Tamil Nadu in the guise of refugees without check would pose a serious threat to the maintenance of law and order and ultimately to the security of the State, but Mr. Karunanidhi had failed to respond to it.

Speaking to reporters from the Tiruchi Government Headquarters Hospital where he is admitted to a special ward for medical treatment, Mr. Nagarajan said that his statement was not confessional but was made on his own volition and asserted that there was 'no political or police pressure' on him to make the statement. Denying reports that CID police officers were meeting him in jail, he said that he only saw two persons – one was a teacher from Pudukottai and the other his eldest son.

Mr. Nagarajan said that he had sent two letters, one to the Chief Judicial Magistrate urging him to arrange for his hospitalisation, and the other to the designated court requesting that his statement under section 164(5) of the Criminal Procedure Code be recorded. He did not want to give a statement to the police under section 162 for it had a lot of legal implications. Having been a Home Secretary, he did not want his statement recorded by the police officers of his own department.

Emphasising that he 'owns full responsibility for every syllable of the statement he made' before the Magistrate, Mr. Nagarajan denied that any 'political pressure' was exerted upon him. He said that he was not guilty of the charges brought against him under the TADA Act in both cases he said that he would contest the cases.

Mr. Nagarajan said that for every issue whether it was small or vital, those responsible needed a scapegoat. They were successfully doing this for a long time and the scapegoat was himself (Nagarajan). 'Because I am a civil servant, I could not effectively answer. Since the deadline for my voluntary retirement also is over, I am starting to answer these questions'.

Apart from the patronage generously extended to the LTTE by officials and politicians during the DMK administration, Nagarajan has in his statement detailed several instances where investigations were impeded and arrested LTTE cadres released, and in this connection he has singled out officials including top police personnel, Karunanidhi's son Mr. M.K. Alagiri and some ministers in the then State cabinet. In particular, the then Chief Minister's son who was based in Madurai and the then Social Welfare Minister Mrs. Subbulakshmi Jagadeesan have been specifically named.

Nagarajan has referred to an incident on 18 February 1990 in which alleged LTTE militants travelling in vehicles from Rameshwaram seashore when stopped at a checkpost at Pattinamkathan indiscriminately opened fire killing the policeman on duty and another civilian at another point, and in the third place more than ten persons were seriously injured. Later it was found that one of the persons in the Maruti van from which the firing occurred was an employee of Pandian Hotel in Madurai who had gone missing and who was a close friend of M.K. Alagiri. The contention of the investigative police team was 'that there was no progress on Pattinamkathan shootout investigation because of the interference by Alagiri'.

In regard to the incident on 19 June 1990 in which the EPRLF leader and 14 others were murdered, Nagarajan has said that he telephoned the then Chief Minister who at that time was in New Delhi and informed him about the incident. The Director General of Police who was in contact with the then CM issued a statement on the same night of the incident denying any 'LTTE involvement' in the shootout. The DGP also told him (Nagarajan) and other senior police officers that the then CM had asked him (DGP) 'that the police need not evince keen interest to trace the killers till his (CM's)

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arrival for further instructions from him (CM)'. Karunanidhi returned from New Delhi on the following day (20.6.90) and requested the police 'to meet him every day and inform of the progress of investigations. Thereafter, these officers reported to the then CM directly and only weekly reports were received by us in the Secretariat which reflected no progress. Myself and the Chief Secretary could see that there was a slackness on the part of the police to investigate the case and ultimately they reported that the assailants escaped. During this period, I was told by the 'Q' branch that some local LTTE men used to meet the then CM at his Oliver Road house and the details of such meetings and the names of these persons were known to K. Shanmuganathan who was his Deputy Secretary all the time and who had the contact addresses of these people and his Security Officers also knew about it'.

Nagarajan has also implicated the then Social Welfare Minister, Mrs. Subbulakshmi Jagadeesan of being involved in pro-LTTE activities. In one instance, a 'Q' Branch Superintendent of Police had told him 'that manufacturing LTTE uniform clothes for transportation to Sri Lanka for the use of the LTTE was going on at Erode and he also told me that this was done at the instance of Smt. Subbulakshmi Jagadeesan. Somewhere in the North Arcot district, the clothes were seized and later at the request of the Minister the clothes were returned to them without registering'. It may be recalled that the Special Investigation Team (SIT) had discovered evidence to show that Mrs. Jagadeesan had provided shelter to Kanthan, an alleged LTTE accomplice in the Rajiv assassination who managed to give the slip to the Tamil Nadu police and escape to Jaffna.

In concluding his 16-paged statement Mr. Nagarajan said, 'I swear that I carried out my responsibility with utmost devotion to duty and keeping the national interest above all as a member of the All India Service and my views on the LTTE would be very evidently available in certain files which I have dealt with and the details I had submitted to the government on 15.11.91. I had not shown any mercy or sympathy knowingly or unknowingly to the LTTE or any other Sri Lankan cadre nor aided them in any manner. I was the first officer who initiated the detention of LTTE men under the National Security Act. More than 80 LTTE hardcore militants were detained under my signature. When a special camp was formed at Vellore and more than 100 persons were kept inside, requests started coming for release of a few of them on the pleas that they were students. I had a very cautious approach at one incident for the release of an alleged student I refused to obey the orders of the CM and recirculated the file with facts that the student was not a bona-fide student and should not be released.

'Right from the Pattinamkathan incident, the Padmanabha case, arrest and seizure at Thillainagar, Thiruvanakoil, Samayapuram and LTTE's illegal activities in coastal areas, I did not aid abet and harbour any of their activities. As vested with power by statute and rule, the then Chief Secretary M.M. Rajendran, and the then CM, Thiru M. Karunanidhi, were alone responsible and accountable for any omissions and commissions. I am giving this statement as my sworn statement under Sec.164(5) of the Criminal Procedure Code to be used as a statement of witness and not under any circumstances as a statement of confession because I was not a party for any activities of aiding abetting and harbouring the LTTE'.

The former Home Secretary told pressmen that he felt let down and betrayed. There was a time very many lawyers and leading members of the DMK would call on him seeking favours. But now that he was in trouble no one had come to see him. Appearing very emotional and tears rolling down his cheeks, Mr. Nagarajan said that he was intimately associated with Mr. Karunanidhi for more than 20 years, both when he was in power and out of power. He had moved with Karunanidhi with 'faith, gratitude and confidence' (nampikkai and viswasam). He underwent sufferings on several occasions because of his association with Mr. Karunanidhi and still cherished his affection for him. 'But when the TADA Act was unleashed on me, Mr. Karunanidhi must have airdashed to Tiruchi' and met him to console him. Even if he was not able to come, at least he must have sent Mr. Murasoli Maran, (DMK MP). He said in Tamil 'manidhabimanthin madippai indruthan therindu konden' (only today I have realised the respect given for human values). There was nothing to learn or talk about humanism any more, lamented Mr. Nagarajan.

Karunanidhi Rebuts Charges of pro-LTTE Activities

Madras, 1 December – The former Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu and DMK leader, M. Karunanidhi defended himself at a press conference describing as 'totally baseless and false' the allegations of the former Home Secretary, R. Nagarajan that the ex-Chief Minister was responsible for the growth and unchecked activities of the LTTE in the State.

Denying the charge that he had always been pro-LTTE and remained indifferent to its activities in Tamil Nadu, Karunanidhi said that it was during his regime that more than 80 Tamil militants, of whom 30 belonged to the LTTE, were booked under the National Security Act and were lodged in special camps.

Refuting the charge of Mr. Nagarajan that Mr. Karunanidhi directed the top Police officials not to pursue the killers of Padmanabha and his 14 colleagues, he said that he was very keen to see that the culprits were nabbed and even ordered the immediate rounding up of all the Sri Lankan Tamil militants to whichever group they belonged. He also had condemned in strong terms the killing by the LTTE of TELO leader Sri Sabaratnam, TULF leader Amirthalingam and the EPRLF leader Padmanabha. Asked as to how the Padmanabha killers had managed to escape, the former Chief Minister said: 'Some times extremists escaped the dragnet as in the case of the airport bomb explosion in August 1984 during the AIADMK regime. Five or six persons were arrested and later they jumped bail'.

Mr. Karunanidhi also denied the charge made by Nagarajan that his son M.K. Alagiri interfered with the progress of police investigation into the shootout at Pattiamkathan in February 1990 in which a police constable and another person were shot dead by LTTE men. He said it was unfair to link his son with the missing employee of the Pandian Hotel who was reported seen in the Maruti van from which the gunmen shot.

In regard to the charge that he had boycotted the ceremonies to receive the last batch of the returning IPKF from Sri Lanka and in reply to the question as to why he denigrated the IPKF forgetting the treacherous LTTE ambushes killing more than 1500 IPKF personnel, Mr. Karunanidhi said, 'I did not boycott, but declined to participate. The IPKF had failed to bring peace but on the other hand had tried to crush the Tamils. I salute the Indian army but only condemn the central government which misused them'.

The DMK leader added that what was surprising was that attempts were being made to give the impression as though the LTTE elements had entered Tamil Nadu after DMK's return

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When Tigers Eat Grass

The events of the past three months in the North-East of Sri Lanka have made it clear that the stalemate on the ground has been broken. What is indisputable, except in the LTTE's totally non-credible propaganda, is that the military balance has swung heavily against the armed Tamil extremists, raising questions about their very future.

In the field the Sri Lankan armed forces, which are professionally and in terms of armaments a quite different proposition from what they were five years ago have their tails up. After winning the battle of Elephant Pass – a miscalculated LTTE initiative pressed through an adventurist and very costly siege – the armed forces have gone from strength to strength. Essentially, they are on the offensive to weaken the military machine of the LTTE, impair its mobility, cut off its political stronghold, the Jaffna peninsula, from the mainland North and East, and expand the area of the contest under government control.

Intriguingly for those who know something about the capabilities and ways of the LTTE, the action has looked almost one-sided thus far. The armed forces have been able to take out three substantial militant camps in the jungles of Mullaithivu in the mainland North, follow this up by seizing five militant camps in Amparai district in the East; and easily beat back the Tiger detachment which stormed an army camp in a face-saving action in the vicinity of Mullaithivu town.

The next stage was 'Operation Valampuri' which saw the well coordinated capture of the little islands of Mandaitivu, Kayts and Karainagar off the Jaffna peninsula; this was a blow to the LTTE's sea-faring capabilities. The campaign in the mainland and peninsular North will press on, switching tracks and targets to keep the Tigers militarily unsettled and politically insecure. The objective, at this stage, appears to be to force Prabhakaran to the negotiating table on the weakened terms or else take further punishment and humiliation.

This is not the first occasion since 1983 that Prabhakaran's organisation has come under massed military pressure. The Vadamarachchi offensive that preceded the conclusion of the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement in 1987 was a trial which caused trauma and immense anxiety to the LTTE by demonstrating that it could not really stand like a conventional army and hold territory against a relentless foe armed with adequate firepower on the ground, air and sea and having few compunctions about civilian safety.

The prospect of being boxed in within densely populated Jaffna, with no option but to stand and fight like a conventional force, was politically and psychologically the LTTE's Achilles heel against a Sinhala foe. (Losing military control of Jaffna to the IPKF was not quite the same thing.) At a critical stage in the 1986-87 crisis for 'the Sri Lankan Tamils', India was able to bale the Tigers out by sending a signal to Colombo in word and deed: 'We will not let you take Jaffna' (Source: former President J.R. Jayewardene). The rest is mishandled history.

As for the IPKF although it fought with self-imposed restraints ('one-and-a-half hands tied to the back') at times it looked like achieving a military breakthrough and bringing the extremists to heel. But adopting classic guerrilla tactics such as 'melting away' and ingenious mining and ambushes, the LTTE survived the fight. Exploiting the Indian restraints vis-a-vis civilians and also the contradictions that ruled out real cooperation between the Sri Lankan and Indian governments, Prabhakaran's organisation even managed to wrest some political mileage – arms and communications assistance and a welcome to the negotiation table by President Premadasa with open arms, although with no serious agenda.

But it is in the nature of extremism to be adventurist, to over-reach the limits of its deadly capabilities, to make costly miscalculations when the cause seems on the up, to fail to learn from the mistakes of other extremist organisations. The experience of the second rise and fall of the JVP in Sri Lanka is instructive. From July 1987 to March 1989, its star seemed definitely on the rise – with its striking capability delivering a death rate of a hundred per day in December 1988 and its politics closing in on Colombo.

For Prabhakaran's LTTE, it has been downhill all the way from Rajiv Gandhi's assassination.

The cyanide trail, among other things, has convinced everyone worth convincing that which carried out this brutal and enormous crime. But what were the motives?

Basically, the LTTE leadership which nursed a strong antagonism and antipathy towards Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and his Sri Lanka policy calculated that his likely return to power would come in the way of its fanatical struggle to carve out a separate Tamil Eelam through uncompromising armed struggle. Not only would he not accept the extremist goal; his track record suggested that he would not accept the extremist organisation's claim to be the liberation movement. The sole and legitimate representative of the Tamils. He was also likely to impede its plan of continuing to use Tamil Nadu as a rear base in the military struggle.

The LTTE blinded by the intensity and enormity of its decision to liquidate a former Indian prime minister who was widely expected to be prime minister again, thought it could ride out the storm and benefit from the effects of its action. Poetic justice has ensured that just the opposite has happened, says N. Ram.

The intention of returning to an activist policy on Sri Lanka was no secret. It was spelt out in the Congress election manifesto: 'the Congress reiterates its commitment to the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement of July 1987 as the basis for the settlement of outstanding issues relating to the Tamil population of Sri Lanka. It will continue its endeavours to find solutions to problems in a manner that will secure the rights of the Sri Lankan Tamils, safeguard our national security interests and ensure the territorial integrity of Sri Lanka.' Significantly no other political party or formation which had a chance of coming to power at the Centre was committed to the framework of the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement as the basis for settling the 'outstanding issues' relating to the Tamil question.

For a Pol Potist organisation with zero regard for human life or democratic values, these considerations added up to a strong, irresistible motivation for heinous murder – although Indian Intelligence failed miserably to track this motivation once the IPKF came

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The War Against Historical Memory

(An excerpt from Report of the University Teachers for Human Rights (Jaffna), 28 August 1991)

Every oppressive political tendency needs to erase historical memory and substitute its own mytho-history. Everything that is a big lie must shrink and shrivel before even a tiny beam of the light of truth. The LTTE understood this well. The extent of repression to which it could allow itself to go depended much on the visible threat posed to the Tamil people as a whole. During the period of good relations with the government, in early 1990, its oppressive methods were running into trouble. Even after the war had begun, its new wave of repression coincided with news of large scale massacres and disappearances in the East, and began about early September 1990.

Regardless of their current passivity and resignation, it set about arresting those with remote past militant connections – particularly those small but politically articulate groups – the others having fled or having already faced death or imprisonment. Those in Jaffna from these groups, which had long been defunct, had quietly become inactive without ever challenging the LTTE. The LTTE's moves against these persons appeared to be mere paranoia at that time. But the situation has become clear now. These persons were living monuments to historical memory, an intolerable link with the past, with past ideals of the militant movement and a time when there were many groups fighting the oppression of the Sri Lankan state.

The war against historical memory has now been organised on a systematic and thorough footing. The most recent purge of May-June was aimed at the Theepori (Sparks) group. This group had split from the PLOTE in early 1985 protesting against its internal repression, and the most remarkable thing they did was to document their experiences inside the PLOTE in a book with the title 'A new kind of world'. They remained totally passive and their book was and continues to be widely circulated by the LTTE. Three of its members recently detained were students of the University of Jaffna.

Within the University of Jaffna itself the 1st and 2nd years are isolated from 3rd and 4th years and are handled differently. They are addressed, admonished and warned in separate meetings. The 3rd and 4th years are a link with the history of the university when it was a different place, when discussion was open and the university took positions against oppression, irrespective of whether it came from the LTTE or the IPKF.

In schools again, the teachers are watched by students taken out, trained and brought back. The LTTE frequently addressed meetings at schools. In addition to the public display of weapons and uniforms, young teenagers are fed with a history which is totally sanitised. There is thus very clear evidence of an attempt to mould a generation without links with the past. As we have seen, several academics and members of the elite have been co-opted in this exercise. Young teenagers are thus pushed into dying for leaders and members of the elite, who as far as they and perhaps their families are concerned, have no intention of dying.

Breaking the colts

With all the allures of falsehood and deceit, children are children. That such large numbers are mobilised into a fighting force seems remarkable to many. Many of them remain in the movement with grave doubts and die with them. We shall take one aspect in breaking them, presented on the basis of testimony given by teenagers who succeeded in leaving the movement.

After a couple of days inside, the initial allure had gone, life inside was oppressive and many of them wanted to leave. One of the children told the man in charge that he wanted to go home. Immediately, everyone was called together and he who wanted to go home was given a sound public thrashing. The others who also wanted to go then kept quiet. Their parents who succeeded in tracing them came to the camp and asked for their children. Each child was faced with his parents and asked if he wished to go home. The answer was consistently 'no'.

In due course a few were given drugs that made them feel violent. They were given the freedom to let loose by torturing prisoners. . . and so it went.

Another revealing instance is that of a young girl from Karaveddy who joined the LTTE. Her father had been a toddy tapper who had died when he fell from a palmyrah tree. Her mother was desperate. During the Jaffna Fort operation last year, the mother received a letter smuggled out of a camp by a labourer. The letter from her daughter said that she was in the Nelliady girls' camp and desperately wanted to go home. She added that four girls from the camp had been taken to Jaffna Fort and had not come back, making her very much afraid.

The mother went to the camp with a friend to plead her case. The leader of the camp repeatedly denied the girl's presence. In desperation, the mother produced her daughter's letter. The leader read the letter, called out the girl, and in her mother's presence slapped her and kicked her with her boot. She then sent the mother away telling her that her daughter will never be released.

Those who normally succeed in getting their children out are members of the elite. It is a reflection of Tamil politics today that a force which cynically treats those at the bottom of the social ladder in this manner is projected as a revolutionary force. Some western academics even appear to credit it as standing for caste liberation.

Mobilising the civilian population

One aspect of mobilisation of civilians is propaganda and a genuine fear of the Sri Lankan army. Those whose children get killed in the LTTE's cause are at first angry. Subsequently their child is praised as a martyr and the parents are made to feel that they had done an invaluable service in sacrificing a child.

In many areas economic life is at a stand-still because of a situation created jointly by the LTTE and the government for different reasons. In some areas people have had little choice, but to sell their labour to the LTTE in return for daily wages. In the Vanni region much damage to economic life has resulted from the 'guerrilla operations' of the Sri Lankan army – Advance, Loot, and Return to Base. Here, a special propaganda appeal is being made by the LTTE to the people by promoting their legendary hero, Pandara Vanniyan, as the forerunner and prototype of Prabakaran.

In some areas, government rations to displaced persons have been used as a means of securing forced labour. Here the Grama Sevaka has to complete two sets of forms, one for the government and the other for the LTTE. The LTTE has to certify a day's labour by a member of the family before the week's rations could be released.

The two sovereigns of gold tax per family in Jaffna is now being vigorously pursued. In some cases people had been imprisoned until the money was found. In one school near Thinnevely, about May, ten girls were picked up after school, several of them daughters of out-of-work farmers. They were released after the sovereigns were paid – often after borrowing from several friends and relatives.

The LTTE, it could be said, has tried nearly every means in the handbook of repression short of physical conscription. Its uneasy edifice cannot hold together or derive whatever legitimacy, without the fear of, and oppression coming from the politics of the Sri Lankan state. The people of course resent both and would like to protest. But every little space has been smothered by intertwined events. Every turn of the LTTE's screw of repression received its licence from, and is traceable to repressive actions and massacres by the state. The invisible spiral of events has thus been moving towards total war. As we have shown in this and the previous volumes, total war and not peace is the logical culmination of the LTTE's politics and its only hope of survival. Yogi had said on May Day of 1987, that civilians dying is a small matter. A small fraction of its population then, he said, was enough to people the new world of Tamil Eelam.

It is left to those who mean well to understand this politics as not just abominable, but also fragile, thriving merely on the weakness, wickedness and stupidity of others. Total war is an unmitigated tragedy that must be averted.

Crackdown in the University of Jaffna

Dominic (Nobert) was a leading member of the 'Theepori' (Spark) group. Following the repression that began in September last year, Dominic fled Jaffna in October. He returned to Jaffna in May in order to make arrangements for the safety of some members who were associated with them and were stuck in Jaffna. The news that he was staying in a house in Kokkuvil was leaked to the LTTE by an informer in the neighbourhood. He was soon picked up by the LTTE. This was quickly followed by the arrests of another 3 members of this group from the university.

The arrests of these students took place about two days after the arrest of Nobert. On 22nd May **Sellathurai Srinivasan** (2nd year Geography Special) of Potpathy Road, Kokkuvil, and **Nagalingam Govindarajan** (3rd year Commerce), of Varani, were arrested.

Srinivasan was from a family of 7 boys and 2 girls. Two brothers had been in the PLOTE and later among the Theepori dissidents in 1985. Nobert is said to have hidden in Srinivasan's sister's house at the time of his arrest.

Another student **Thirukethees** (1st year Arts) was arrested at the university a few days later, by LTTE cadres accompanied by MMK students, the MMK being a one time cultural organisation and now effectively the policing arm of the LTTE within the university. Thirukethees had wanted to see the Vice Chancellor. He was told, in response, 'There is no need. If he knows the LTTE took you, he will understand'. This was later represented by the LTTE as Thirukethees running into the university to hide. A few days later Editor Ravi, an LTTE functionary addressed the junior students in isolation. The students had been demanding to see their detained colleagues. Editor gave the charges against those detained. Srinivasan, besides his associations, is accused of planning to help in running a dissident paper for the Theepori. The charge against Govindarajan was more ironic. He is said to have in 1985 hidden a Theepori dissident hunted by the PLOTE! Thirukethees had the vague charge of supplying information. Editor then went into a harangue calling those detained not just traitors to the LTTE, but also to the student body. Having worked himself upto a climax, Editor asked the students what punishment should be given to the detainees. A silence followed. A lone voice then suggested meekly 'Pardon them', turning what should have been a gory climax into an anti-climax.

Editor went into a rage. 'That word is not in our dictionary', he said. He then warned them not to be funny because they are university students, adding that they have a large number of detainees and do not care whether someone is from the university or not. The students were also told that the LTTE was not concerned with 3rd and 4th years as they were going out, but that the others had better look sharp. An MMK student duly rose and gave Editor the vote of thanks, expressing the students' gratitude for his profound discourse. We have already observed that this is part of the effort to break with tradition, obliterate history and mould a new generation within narrow mental confines.

About a month later, the LTTE radio announced that a student union meeting would take place at Kailasapathy Auditorium the following morning, 24th June.

The students were surprised to find a senior academic and former senior student counsellor going up the stage to address them. In addressing the students, he told them, 'There are still weeds left in the university. They will not be tolerated. These weeds must be plucked up and cast away...' The students were shell-shocked, and afraid. The former senior student counsellor went on to call the detainees traitors, despite earlier having said that inquiries had not been concluded. He also listed Muslims among the traitors.

Following the meeting, the students found that all exits from the university had been shut. The students were herded out through the main entrance, were handed prepared slogans, and were importuned to participate in a demonstration protesting the arrest of a student Jayaseelan in Batticaloa by the army and the massacres in the East. To bar escape, the demonstration was escorted on its flanks by the MMK. After the demonstration had commenced there was suddenly a change of slogan. The cry, 'Release all students detained', was heard coming from the middle section. The 'police' rushed to the centre of the commotion and an argument ensued, mainly with 1st years.

The senior academic addressing a student meeting not called by the union, and in such intimidating terms, is something totally unprecedented in the history of the University of Jaffna. Such persons would at other times remark that should the army come into Jaffna, they would all become 'born again Sri Lankans'. Nor do they act under compulsion. There are humble school heads who have refused to receive the LTTE's leading personage Anton Balasingham during his routine 'Pied Piper' mission to schools. The LTTE knows the limits to which it can push individuals. Sycophancy has long been a respectable academic tradition in this country. By comparison the decency and courage of a number of ordinary, vulnerable, students in an atmosphere of terror, is remarkable.

We had observed that the Theepori group had existed passively, at best as a literary circle. While telling the public that they were traitors, the LTTE circulated copies of their 'A new kind of world', found where Dominic was staying. More ironically, the same book describing the repressive atmosphere within the PLOTE, is now being serialised in an LTTE journal published in Canada. Those authors now in LTTE hands, may be undergoing much of what they had described in their own book, as a prophetic warning about the direction of the militancy in general.

We observe that the backdrop to the singular event in the university on 24th June was the situation in the East, culminating in the Kokkadichcholai massacre. At present the students are mostly cynical, are waiting to get out, and will only raise issues in a cursory manner that is not sustained. With the socially conscientious students suppressed and without the ability to organise around issues, it is the frivolous element that gains publicity, and this in turn is used by the Tigers to isolate the university. The situation contrasts sharply with times when there was a great deal of free discussion. In May 1977, the university Science Students Union even sent a team

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to investigate the plight of hill-country Tamil workers from Delta North Estate, Pusselewa, who had been subjected to a grievous communally motivated attack, and a balanced, mature report was published and distributed. The student body then was conscious of playing a role in nation-building, embracing the wider Tamil speaking community. Today all that has been dashed to pieces. The handful of students at present who are seen to have character and have personally refused to compromise with untruth are closely watched by the MMK. The students detained had previously received several visits from the MMK.

During the recent Elephant Pass campaign, the LTTE's propaganda chief, Yogi, observed angrily in a public speech, that young persons in their early teens were dying on the battle field, while those in their twenties were donating blood. He said that it should have been the other way round. Why this reversal of roles over the last five years before when it was those of a mature age who died fighting, is a question that Yogi dare not ask.

Martyred at Silavathurai

Senthooran (Castro) of Kali Kovilady, Jaffna, was among the brightest students at Jaffna Central College, having scored 8 distinctions at his O.L.s. Both his parents were in Germany. Shortly after the outbreak of war in June 1990, he went to Colombo with the intention of joining his parents. He was refused his visa as the German embassy found an apparent hitch in his papers. His father sent a message asking him to get back to Jaffna and follow his A.L.s. He went back to staying with his aunt in Jaffna and was unhappy, thus losing interest in studies. This is when he decided to join the LTTE.

Having joined, he told friends whom he met, 'I would like to leave. But a gun is ever before me.' In March this year he went as group leader in one of the many units sent to attack the army camp at Silavathurai in the Mannar sector. He was asked to advance against the camp. According to accounts coming from survivors, he protested that it would be suicidal to advance by daylight towards a camp sited in open land. He was reprimanded and ordered to proceed. He was an early victim of the army's shelling.

Senthooran's death did not at first receive official publicity. His friends were the first to print and circulate condolence notices privately. It was then that the LTTE appeared to take notice.

His picture then went up on posters and in speeches he was commemorated a worthy martyr for a cause close to his heart, and an example to others. So rests another in the arms of eternity – a small atom of a big lie.

The Jaffna Fort

Thileepan gave the Dutch Fort in Jaffna momentous significance just before commencing his fast to death in 1987. He called it a symbol of oppression of the Tamil Nation. Thus early in the war, the LTTE banked much on capturing the Fort. The Sri Lankan army withdrew from the Fort in September last year. The LTTE then commenced the demolition of this archaeological treasure turned symbol of oppression. About the first to go after the LTTE takeover was the large church, one of the finest pieces of Dutch architecture in this country, handed over by the government to the Jaffna Christian Union in the 60s. The walls of the fort are now in the process of demolition.

The 'Muththamil Vila' organised by the LTTE during the middle of the year to commemorate Tamil culture was one of those occasions when streams of visitors were allowed into what remains of the Fort.

One of those things that survives intact is the Fort prison, not lacking in inmates. Additional housing for prisoners took the form of several tin huts with slits about a foot above the ground, and circular holes with tubes above the slits, for prisoners to pass urine. Persons inside were trying to attract the attention of the visitors, who had accidentally strayed from the visitors' area. An LTTE man came rushing and shooed them away. He then banged the tin hut to stop the prisoners from calling out. Each hut was estimated to contain up to 20 persons.

An LTTE boy casually explained later that the prisoners were LTTE cadres who wanted to leave the organisation and had given notice. Their punishment was to spend a year on one meal a day demolishing the Fort stone by stone. They are allowed visitors once a month. After a year, they could leave. A prisoner told a visitor, 'This thing is so torturous that it would have been easier to join the Black Tiger suicide unit'. If this is the condition of prisoners who are LTTE members, the conditions under which other prisoners live are left to conjecture.

It looks as though the treasured parts of the Fort would go. But the prison quarters may remain as a symbol of 'liberation'.

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home. The net LTTE calculation must have been that Rajiv dead was more useful to the 'cause' than Rajiv alive. Exactly the reverse has been demonstrated in political terms.

From June 1990 to may 1991, the former prime minister repeatedly raised concern over what was happening in the Tamil areas as a result of the operations conducted by the Sri Lankan army. On March 5 and 15, 1991, he met an LTTE representative and sympathiser for friendly discussions hinting at an attitude of conditional and moderate support to the Tamil struggle.

His ally, AIADMK leader Jayalalitha, indicated her mind and feelings on Sri Lanka in a newspaper interview conducted in April 1991: 'As long as the genocide continues in Sri Lanka and, Tamil youth are rounded up and killed, refugees will be pouring into India. We cannot turn them away because it is our duty to provide them relief and rehabilitation. . . If the genocide continues unabated, I think there will be nothing wrong if India thinks of a military option as Indira Gandhi did in the case of Bangladesh.'

Practice, the LTTE was allowed to bring its wounded fighters for treatment to South India from mid 1991 under President's Rule; this pointed to a sympathetic Congress and AIADMK attitude on the ground.

The LTTE blinded by the intensity and enormity of its decision to liquidate a former Indian prime minister who was widely expected to be prime minister again, thought it could ride out the storm and benefit from the effects of its action. Poetic justice has ensured that just the opposite has happened.

As the Sri Lanka armed forces press on with their offensive on the mainland as well as the peninsular North, there is a deafening silence from India; perhaps even tacit approval.

In balance, public opinion in Tamil Nadu and the rest of India would probably be happy if Prabhakaran's organisation is subjugated without much of a civilian toll. In March 1988, Jayalalitha characterised the Tigers as 'young and idealistic' and warned Rajiv Gandhi against any harm that might befall Prabhakaran; today she would have no inhibition in branding them as anti-Indian terrorists. The basic assumptions of India's post-1983 policy towards Sri Lanka no longer exist.

The terms of the struggle, and the internal and external perceptions, have changed profoundly. Barring a hard core of Sri Lankan Tamil support, the LTTE has few friends round the world. In fact hardly anyone of consequence refers to the fighting as an 'ethnic conflict' anymore. That is essentially the achievement of the LTTE's Pol Potist extremism and brutality.

– Current.

THE SUB-CONTINENTAL SCENE

Rao Emerges Stronger After By-elections

by Mayank Chhaya

NEW DELHI – Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao has emerged politically stronger from last week's by-elections in 15 parliamentary constituencies which were viewed as a referendum on his government's performance.

The ruling Congress Party won seven of the 11 seats for which the results were declared. This includes Nandyal in Andhra Pradesh where Rao notched up a world record victory margin of over 580,297 votes. Defence Minister Sharad Pawar, contesting from his home town of Baramati in Maharashtra won his seat by 458,000 votes. Both defeated candidates of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). In former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi's constituency, Amethi in Uttar Pradesh, his close friend Satish Sharma won by nearly 100,000 votes, also over a BJP rival.

Since the by-election in any case did not offer the Congress party a chance to gain a simple majority in a House of 520 seats, its results were watched more as a response to the Rao government's performance so far, especially its economic reforms. From that standpoint, the party seems to have found a degree of popular acceptance. It will now have 234 seats, 27 short of a simple majority of 261. With its allies the All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhgam (AIADMK) the Muslim League and the United Communist Party of India, the party has reasonable strength in Parliament.

Some Seats Remain Vacant

Even after these by-elections 23 seats would still remain vacant. They include 13 in Punjab, where elections have been promised for February, six in Jammu and Kashmir, where nobody knows if and when they would be held and three seats (Purnea and Patna in Bihar and Meerut in Uttar Pradesh) which are involved in lawsuits involving previous elections. By-elections in the New Delhi constituency, where film stars Rajesh Khanna of the Congress and Shatrughna Sinha of the BJP are contesting, were countermanded owing to the death of an independent candidate. Partial repoll was ordered in three parliamentary constituencies in Bihar by the Election Commission. The results for these seats will be declared after the repoll.

The BJP won two seats, the Bahujan Samah Party and Forward Bloc one each. Counting was continuing in Cudapah in Andra Pradesh where the Congress candidate was leading.

In the absence of any overriding issues, the by-elections generated interest only in terms of individual contests. There was special interest in the Prime Minister's nomination from a constituency to which he belongs but never visited once for campaigning after filing poll papers. What lent Nandyal a high profile was reports of pre-poll intimidation by Congress Party workers of anyone who contested against Rao. Independent candidates were roughed up allegedly by Congress workers in order to discourage them from entering the contest. There was an instance of an aspirant dying of heart conditions after he was reportedly bashed up by some people allegedly in league with the party.

The electioneering in this constituency came in for some sharp comments in the media. *The Statesman* newspaper reported the Prime Minister's victory under a headline 'Rao Wins, But Without Grace.' The eager beavers in the Congress, obviously trying to curry favours, did so much towards creating his record win which could not but sully the reputation of Narasimha Rao,' the paper's report said. The paper spoke of the by-election having been rigged by the Congress 'satraps'.

A cartoon in the *Indian Express* had Rao making a 'V' for victory sign with his two fingers depicting guns. Throughout the allegations of ballot fraud and alleged use of sordid means raised by the main opposition BJP and other parties, Rao maintained total silence.

Quite curiously, Rao's supporters had boasted before the poll that he was headed for a mention in the Guinness Book of Records for the biggest victory margin. Rao does indeed seem set for the mention. He would replace Ram Vilas Paswan, a former Labour Minister in the V.P. Singh government, who had won the 1989 election from Hajipur in Bihar by 504,448 votes.

55 Percent Voting

The importance of this election was on two levels. On one level, it was the first ever election in the last 40 years without the influence of the Nehru-Gandhi family. Rao became the first Congress Party leader to seek a sort of 'mini' general election without the family's overbearing presence. The other gauge was the number of voters. Nearly 21 million people were covered in 15 parliamentary and 56 state assembly constituencies. Some 55 percent voters exercised their franchise. This election was big enough to test the Rao government's standing.

In political terms, the aftermath of the by-elections may bring with it a split in the V.P. Singh-led Janata Dal party. Ajit Singh, a former Industry Minister, has been openly speaking against V.P. Singh, and speculation was that he would join the Congress Party after the by-elections. In an interview with a news video recently Ajit Singh 'categorically' stated that he would never join the Congress Party. But when asked if there was any guarantee for that he added a rider: 'There are no guarantees in life.' If he joins the party along with some 20 members of Parliament, then the Rao government could attain a simple majority. Political analysts point to the vacant position of industry minister in the government and say it could be a bait for the U.S.-educated Ajit Singh.

But beyond this complex political arithmetic lies a subtle but unmistakable change within the Congress Party and left of the centre parties' attitude towards it. Over six months after Rajiv Gandhi's death, the party is no more an object of contempt for other party leaders. There are reports that the new Congress leadership, free from the Nehru-Gandhi stranglehold, is already 'chipping away' at Rajiv Gandhi's legacy. Rao has already sloughed off his timid and undecisive image which he acquired when Gandhi was alive.

Party Insiders

Party insiders say Rao's 'demeanor' has changed in the last four months. He asserts himself like never before and is ever more willing to make his presence felt in party affairs. The movement to foist Sonia Gandhi on the party turned out to be shortlived making Rao less anxious about his position.

Though the outcome is unlikely to allow Rao the kind of flexibility he would ideally expect, it certainly brings more confidence for him. He had acquired a reputation as a leader without any mass base though he won the parliamentary election from Ramtek in Maharashtra in 1989. His overwhelming victory from Nandyal is bound to reverse that image. Despite frequent reports in the media, there is so far no serious challenge to his leadership within his party. His main opposition comes from the BJP, which too seems to have become indulgent towards him with its leader calling Rao the 'most respected Prime Minister.' The threat from V.P. Singh has been

Continued on page 23

Amnesty International

Human Rights Violations in North-East Sri Lanka

(Continued from last issue)

In another incident reported to Amnesty International, a convoy of Tamil civilians travelling to Batticaloa from Colombo and Valachchenai on 20 February 1991 were attacked by Muslim home guards outside Eravur. Six passengers on the buses were killed. Others were injured, and some are unaccounted for. A report by *Associated Press* on 21 February 1991 said that the attack, which it ascribed to a 'Muslim mob', appeared to be in retaliation for the killing of two Muslims by the LTTE at Saddam Hussein village, outside Batticaloa, on 19 February 1991. However, witnesses have said that home guards in uniform were responsible. A military escort had been provided to protect the convoy. However, the military escort turned back at the home guard checkpoint at the southern side of Eravur, leaving the convoy unprotected for the last part of its journey into Batticaloa. The convoy was attacked soon after. According to reports, shots were fired at the buses, and the driver of one bus was shot dead. His bus left the road and the passengers tried to escape, but were attacked with knives by home guards. The bus was set on fire. Other buses in the convoy apparently proceeded to Batticaloa. From the reports received by Amnesty International, it appears that the military did nothing to prevent this attack, nor to intervene once it had begun. Amnesty International understands that the army camp is located close to the scene of the attack, and within earshot of gunfire. Yet no soldiers arrived to prevent the attack continuing or to help the survivors. The Ministry of Defence denies this. It has informed Amnesty International that the fact that the escort had returned was not exceptional as no escorts were considered necessary during that period in that area. It also claims that several passengers were saved by soldiers who had rushed to the spot. The army also claims to have transported the injured to hospital. After the event, the military commander for the area is reported to have instructed commanders of the home guards that if another such incident occurred, the army would recall the weapons issued to home guards. Amnesty International does not know of any inquiry held into the incident, nor of any attempt by the authorities to identify and prosecute those responsible for these killings. It has not found any evidence of survivors having been taken to the hospital by the army.

Reports of killings committed by a so-called vigilante group in Batticaloa in late April 1991 were a most disturbing development. The methods used in the killings were much the same as those used by death squads believed to be linked to the security forces in the south in recent years. Headless bodies were reportedly found in the Batticaloa area on several occasions in April 1991. The heads had apparently been severed. Notices had been placed near at least one of the victims saying that they had been killed by the 'Black Cobras' – a hitherto unknown group. According to reports, on 26 April two headless bodies were found at Iruthayapuram; on 27 April, three more were seen at Mandur; and on 28 April two further headless bodies were dumped near an STF camp near Kallady bridge. On 27 April, the body of Sivagnanam Sathgunanandan, the younger brother of an area leader of the LTTE, was reportedly found in a sack at Sinna Oppuwadi, Batticaloa. It bore stab wounds. According to a report in *The Island*, Colombo, of 1 May 1991, he had been abducted from his workplace at the telecommunications centre in Batticaloa by unidentified armed men on 24 April. A poster found near his body said the 'Black Cobras' had killed him 'as punishment for helpers, relations and family members of Tigers'. Other posters are reported to have appeared in Batticaloa town threatening death to any person who has contact with the LTTE.

The Ministry of Defence has informed Amnesty International that 'in the case of the headless bodies claimed to be an act of Black Cobras, it has not been possible to establish who were behind it. It is strongly believed to be an act of a rival group. There has been no further incidents by that group.' Amnesty International has not received any further reports of human rights violations by the 'Black Cobras' from Batticaloa District. It understands that the President of Sri Lanka personally intervened in this matter.

Abductions by groups of armed men in plainclothes and driving vehicles without number-plates had been reported several months earlier from Trincomalee. For example, on 15 July 1990 three security officers working at the Trincomalee Port Authority were reportedly abducted by such a group near the jetty, and driven off in a black pick-up truck which had no number-plates. Further arrests in Trincomalee were reportedly carried out by soldiers out of uniform. For example, in July 1990, 14 people were reportedly taken into custody from Nilaveli refugee camp, Trincomalee District, by army personnel wearing black clothes. Amnesty International does not know their names or their fate.

Amnesty International has gathered full details about many hundreds of cases of people reported to have 'disappeared'. Many of these people are believed to be victims of extrajudicial execution, deliberately killed in custody and disposed of secretly. As large numbers of 'disappearances' began to be reported in the east in June 1990, burning bodies were regularly seen in several towns and other bodies – some apparently with the heads severed – were washed up from the sea. These bodies were often believed to be those of the 'disappeared'. One person, who had been detained at Plantain Point army base in Trincomalee and then released, described the fate of fellow-detainees to a journalist as follows:

'I was kept blindfolded for two days and beaten with iron bars. I saw some of my friends being beaten to death. Then their corpses were heaped together with tyres and burnt inside the camp.' (*Independent*, London, 8 April 1991)

In some cases known to Amnesty International, a relative has been able to identify a body found by the road as that of a person who had been detained.

Inquiries made with the security forces or government authorities about the whereabouts of detainees frequently produce no result, or an unsatisfactory explanation. It is possible, however, that some of those who have been reported as 'disappeared' may be held in unacknowledged detention, as the authorities have failed to provide lists of those held in their custody. Most commonly, relatives or others inquiring on their behalf are faced with a denial by the security forces that a missing person is in their custody, even when the arrest took place in front of witnesses. For example, on 29 August 1990 the Batticaloa Peace Committee, a citizens group which makes representations to the authorities on behalf of relatives of prisoners, submitted a list to the army headquarters in the town of 380 people who had reportedly 'disappeared' after being taken into custody. Those listed were reported to have been detained at various times between mid-June and mid-August 1990. On 21 September, the brigadier at the headquarters replied, saying that three of the people listed, who he named, had been 'taken into custody for their alleged involvement in terrorist activities and subsequently

Continued on page 21

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Continued from page 19

handed over to CID for Legal action.... Please note that no other person mentioned in the referred list was taken into custody by the Security Forces under this Headquarters.' Alternatively, when such inquiries are made the security forces may admit that certain people had been arrested, but then claim that they were released soon after.

Reports indicate that members of the regular security forces – the army, the police and the Special Task Force (STF) – were responsible for many of the reported extrajudicial executions and 'disappearances'. Others were reportedly perpetrated by home guards who launched retaliatory attacks on Tamil civilians, with the apparent acquiescence of the security forces, following attacks committed by the LTTE.

In spite of the many instances of 'disappearances' and deliberate killings committed by government forces, Amnesty International is also aware of some instances in which individual officers have intervened to save the life of a person who was likely to be killed. One example is given above.

Those who have 'disappeared' have been detained in a variety of circumstances. Many have 'disappeared' following round-ups of large numbers of people for screening as potential LTTE suspects. During such operations, people are often screened by local Muslims co-operating with the security forces or by members of Tamil groups opposed to the LTTE, which also co-operate with the security forces. The round-up of potential suspects has been reported from refugee camps as well as from villages. Young Tamil men are particularly likely to be rounded up, but the names of old men, women and young children also appear on lists of those who have 'disappeared' after being arbitrarily detained. These people could not all have reasonably been considered terrorist suspects: the list of 'disappeared' people from one round-up in Batticaloa district, for example, includes babies only months old together with their mothers.

Others reported to have 'disappeared' have been taken into detention individually from their homes, were detained while walking along the street, or removed by security forces or home guards from the buses or other vehicles in which they were travelling.

The extrajudicial executions, burning of bodies and 'disappearances' started in several towns in the east within days of government forces moving in. Father Eugene Hebert, an American Jesuit priest who has lived in Sri Lanka for 42 years, described the outbreak of killings in Batticaloa as follows in a letter to his brother-in-law:

'When the army first came in on June 25 no shot was fired as the Tamil Tigers had withdrawn to fight first in Jaffna. But then began arrests of innocent citizens, looting, killings and burning on public roads to terrorize the people, etc. I had to supervise the burial of two, a man and a woman, who had been killed, put into a sack and thrown off the bridge into the lagoon just in front of St. Sebastian's Church. They had been in the water three days before we were able to get the army to let us bury them.

'There has been some improvement lately. The Peace Committee ... has made many representations to the Army authorities. Their efforts have stopped the burning of bodies on the public roads and there have not been any persons thrown off the bridge for two weeks now. But the arrests of boys, mostly innocent, continue.'

This letter was written on 4 August 1990. The note of optimism in the second paragraph quoted was probably ill-founded 'disappearances' and extrajudicial executions continued to be committed in large number in the Batticaloa area after this date, and Father Hebert himself apparently 'disappeared' on 15 August 1990 while travelling from Valaichchenai to Batticaloa on a red scooter, along a road which was reportedly deserted except for regular army checkpoints.[8]

In Pottuvil, Thirukkovil and other towns in Amparai District, STF officers are reported to have assured civilians that they would not be harmed. However, in town after town in the east, and with particular intensity at first in towns where the LTTE had taken captive and killed policemen, 'disappearances' and extrajudicial executions of Tamil civilians began soon after government forces moved in.

One person interviewed by Amnesty International explained how he, together with about 50-60 others, was rounded up at Karaitivu, Amparai District on 21 June 1990 and produced before an approximately 20-year-old boy who was forced by two soldiers sitting on each side of him to identify them as LTTE supporters. He said that 15 of them were pointed out, including him. One of those taken protested his innocence and told the soldiers to make inquiries about him at the local police station as he was a policeman. He identified himself as Chithravel Sivalingam. The witness said:

Two soldiers then beat him with two large logs. They beat him on the chest two or three times. He shouted first, then no more noise came. He fell down and began to rattle'.

The bodies of Chithravel Sivalingam and five others, killed in a similar way, were put into a CTB bus. One of the prisoners forced to carry them to the bus, was also hit at the door of the bus and pushed inside. The witness said he got this news later from the prisoner pushed into the bus who had been able to escape with partial burns.

Selected cases of 'disappearance' and extrajudicial executions

Several Tamil policemen were among those reported to have 'disappeared' in Amparai District. They had been taken prisoner by the LTTE in June and then released. The STF reportedly then detained them later that month with the assistance of local Muslim home guards. The body of one Tamil policeman – apparently the victim of extrajudicial execution – was found outside Kalmunai hospital at the end of June, after government forces had regained control of the town.

On 2 August 1990, 150 men were reportedly taken from Pottuvil refugee camp, only 30 of whom were subsequently released. The police and the STF both denied that they had carried out the detentions, and the whereabouts of the remaining 120 men remains unknown, to Amnesty International's knowledge. A local person is reported as saying that in the days following these detentions, smoke was seen rising from the police station. It is suspected these prisoners may have been killed and burned.

In another incident, 158 people staying at the refugee camp at the Eastern University campus, Vandaramullai, Batticaloa, were reported to have been taken into custody by the security forces on 5 September 1990. By 20 September, when the local Peace Committee submitted the names of those detained to the authorities, their whereabouts were still unknown. The Peace Committee requested that 'their present whereabouts can be intimated to enable us to convey the facts to the parties concerned, please.' A member of parliament for Batticaloa raised these possible 'disappearances' in parliament in September. He said:

'I am not blaming the security forces nor the Hon. Minister of Defence for these arrests. The security forces have been sent there to restore law and order in the area. They may be having their own problems. I am not blaming them. What I want to tell this House is that when people are taken into custody or arrested the security forces must screen them and release the innocent persons as quickly as possible. It is only if they do this that they would be able to win the confidence and trust of the people of the area. It is almost two weeks, Sir, but no one has been released. I am submitting the list of names of these persons totalling 158 to this House. The arrested persons are in the age group of 12 to 41 years. The entire people in the refugee camp were witness to these arrests and even this list was compiled by the authorities in the camp who are running this refugee camp.' (*Hansard*, Colombo, September 1990, p.1205)

(To be continued).

[8] Bertram Francis was travelling as a pillion passenger with Father Hebert that day, and has also 'disappeared'. The Commander of the Army, Lieutenant General Hamilton Wanasinghe, has assured Amnesty International that 'troops had nothing to do with this disappearance', and said the army was trying to locate Father Hebert. The Ministry of Defence stated that Father Hebert may have been abducted by the LTTE as he was trying to bring harmony between Muslim and Tamil communities in the area (*Daily News*, Colombo, 17 August 1990); others have suggested that they may have been killed by Muslims in the area. Their whereabouts remain unknown. Amnesty International does not know whether the investigations announced have in fact been held into these 'disappearances' as no results have been made public.

Sailing into Trouble

V. Jayanth
in Madras

When the Indian Navy chased and caught a ship smuggling explosives for the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) in the first week of November, the Sri Lankan Tamil militant group suffered a serious blow. The vigil on the sea is putting tremendous pressure on the Tigers at a time when renewed fighting has broken out in Sri Lanka and the crackdown on them continues in Tamil Nadu and other States. And these together have the potential to deliver the *coup de grace* to the LTTE which had enjoyed free movement not only on sea but along the Tamil Nadu coast till January 1991 and had run deep roots in the State thanks to the patronage it received in Tamil Nadu.

Despite the cold relations between Sri Lanka and India, which have soured further after the South Asian Association of Regional Cooperation (SAARC) summit scheduled in Colombo early in November failed to come off, the two countries are fighting the LTTE from both sides. And the floundering Premadasa Government has a political compulsion to go after the Tigers – to counter the campaign that the Sri Lankan President had entered into a pact with the militant group.

Now that the Government of India and the Tamil Nadu Government under a determined All-India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK) leader Jayalalitha have strengthened field-level coordination among the agencies involved in the drive against the LTTE, the militants and their local associates have no option except to flee the Indian shores, if they can. Many have been nabbed along the coast from Vedaranyam to Rameswaram while trying to do this.

That the LTTE was securing arms and ammunition from different parts of the world and routing these through Bangkok and Singapore has been no secret. The ship seized now, Tongnova, was in the fleet which has been permanently floating in international waters, moving between Bangkok and the Sri Lankan waters via Singapore.

Seldom did the ship touch any port. The LTTE reportedly arranges to ferry the arms from a main vessel of the dealers in its smaller vessels to ships like Tongnova. These carriers move close to the northern coast of Sri Lanka and wait for the Tigers to unload the cargo into their speed-boats.

Tongnova was carrying supplies destined for Vettlakani in northern Sri Lanka. On a piece of intelligence about the shipment, the Indian Navy put the Coast Guard which has a considerable presence along the Tamil Nadu coast, on the job of tracking it down. Finding the ship 'straying' into Indian waters, the Coast Guard despatched a Dornier aircraft on a reconnaissance sortie. The ship, with a smaller boat in tandem, was spotted at dusk on November 6 about '10 nautical miles east of Karaikal,' according to Commodore J.P. Carneiro, Coast Guard's commander in charge of the eastern region.

From then it was a coordinated effort by the Navy and the Coast Guard. Since it required some time for the Navy to mobilise its ships, the air fleet of the Coast Guard maintained a mid-sea vigil till INS Saryu moved abreast and caught up with Tongnova at daybreak on November 8.

Says Carneiro: 'We have four Dorniers and two helicopters stationed in Madras and we mobilised our entire air strength to put in 32 flying hours to monitor the movement of the fugitive vessels. Each aircraft had to return to base after a sortie of four to six hours. By rotating them, we kept track for a day and a half almost.'

The naval officer-in-charge, INS Adyar, Madras, Commodore H. Sahney, said when the two smuggling vessels attempted to break away. A salvo was fired just ahead of them as a warning. Despite this and appeals over the loud hailer system on board the aircraft, they did not stop. 'At first light on November 8, our personnel on INS Saryu boarded the fleeing ship and took possession of it without facing any resistance.' The Naval Headquarters in Delhi and the Eastern Naval Command in Visakhapatnam were fully involved in planning and executing the operation.

The ship's master, Balan alias Ganesan, told the magistrate before whom he was produced along with his crew, that the vessel was in international waters and they had no business in Tamil Nadu. They were aware of the hostile atmosphere prevailing in the State, he said.

The operation was significant though there were no major arms on board. The catch included a wide range of items that combine to make very powerful explosive devices: activated charcoal, fine aluminium powder, sulphur, potassium nitrate.

All the 10 men on board were Sri Lankan Tamils, either of the LTTE or specially recruited by it for this transport/smuggling wing. Most of them belong to Kokkuvil or Velvettithurai and were flown out to Bangkok or Singapore from Colombo or Madras at various stages.

Balan and the engine room operator, Sivan alias Sivathambi, were asked to steer the ship to Madras, while the others, mostly in their early 20s, were transferred to INS Saryu. They were handed over to the 'Q' Branch of the Tamil Nadu Police as soon as the ships sailed into Madras harbour early in the morning of November 10.

The police did not find any of the 'wanted' faces in the catch. There had been information that a prized militant, Kuttisri, was onboard. The crew fabricated a story that 'Captain' Kandaswamy was heading them till they were spotted by the aircraft and he escaped in a speed-boat that came following an SOS. But the police disproved this.

Police said they had detailed information about the smuggling operations and how Tamil Nadu had been used for almost two years to raise funds and indulge in 'hawala' transactions. 'Through drug trafficking and the smuggling of gold biscuits which were sold in India, the LTTE raised funds. This was cleverly converted into foreign exchange through hawala operations and used abroad to purchase arms, ammunition, equipment, clothes and medicines to keep their battle going,' they explained.

A diary that lists arms and ammunition smuggled and delivered between March 21 and May 28 and two personal address books of the crew members were recovered from the ship. In these were found the addresses of about 20 contacts in Tamil Nadu and a number of persons in Thailand, Singapore, Switzerland, Cyprus, Greece and so on, stated to be relatives or smuggling contacts.

The seizure of the ship was followed by the suicide of the LTTE's organiser in Tamil Nadu, Peria Santhan. He could have been very useful if caught alive in piecing together the plot to assassinate Rajiv Gandhi. He was known to be involved in that mission and also in the killing of Padmanabha and his Eelam People's Revolutionary Front (EPRLF) colleagues in Madras in June 1990.

Simultaneously, the 'Q' Branch has spread its net far and wide for the growing number of persons recruited by Ravi alias Ravichandran for the Tamil National Retrieval Force. They are trained in Jaffna and sent back to Tamil Nadu.

There is information that some LTTE militants are still in the State to help the injured cadres coming from Jaffna. The police and other investigating agencies are aware that the LTTE will retaliate in some way, though later. At the moment, the militants are being hounded out.

– Frontline.

QUIZ CROSSWORDS – No. 11. Compiled by: Richards

Closing date for completed grid and coupon to be received is 31 January 1991.

Answers and the name of the winner – first all correct entry pulled out of a bag – will be announced in the February 1992 issue.

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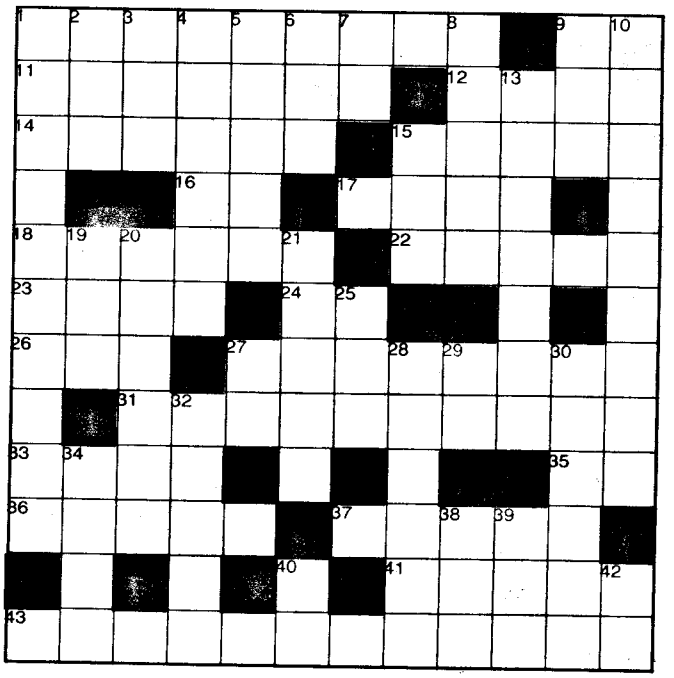

Across.

1. Festival that commemorates the birth of a Messiah (9)
9. In the year of the Lord, abb. (2)
11. Spiders belong to this order (7)
12. Competent (4)
14. The disciple of Jesus who doubted, died during his missionary journey in India (6)
15. Tailless diving bird (5)
16. Laotian monetary unit (2)
17. American mountain lion (4)
18. Trusted adviser (6)
22. Ave –, Hail Mary (5)
23. Crooked or awry (4)
24. First part of the Holy Bible, abb. (2)
26. Rapid decline (3)
27. The elephant killer is a large Amazonian serpent (8)
31. Dravidian harvest festival (4, 6)
33. Its delta nurtured and nourished one of the world's greatest civilizations (4)
35. Greek alphabet used extensively in mathematics (2)
36. A cowardly, underhand person (5)
37. Faith and loyalty (5)
41. Threefold (5)
43. They travelled a great distance following a great star to the little town of Bethlehem to pay homage to a little babe (5, 4, 3)

Down:

1. Double-hulled boats, the technology of which is Dravidian origin (10)
2. Prefix with which a member of the Royal family is addressed (3)
3. Indian Prime Minister (3)
4. Refers to a prisoner or a sanatorium (6)
5. A defence pact of the Western powers outside Europe, Africa and the United States, abb. (5)
6. It is briefly (3)
7. Master of Divinity (2)
8. Popular Indian brahmanical surname (5)
9. Priestly vestment in Christianity (3)
10. Hindu festival of lights (9)
13. Relevance or relationship (7)
15. Sticky substance could be a relaxing chewer too (3)
19. Self-esteem (3)
20. Irritate or provoke (6)
21. Lordless samurai reduced to banditry (5)
25. This type of root grows vertically downwards (3)
27. Automobile Association, abb. (2)
28. Marked areas for certain outdoor sports (6)
29. Egyptian and biblical name for Heliopolis (2)
30. Nymph turned into a laurel-bush in Greek mythology (6)
32. Haul by rope (5)
34. One-twelfth of one is 36th of another in length (4)
38. Rock or mineral from which metal and other valuable substances are extracted (3)
39. Boy's first name (3)
40. Right opposite to Southeast, abb (2)
42. Printer's measure (2)

Quiz Crosswords – 9: Solutions.

Across: 1. Union. 5. Uduvil. 10. Taj. 12. IDA. 13. Baps. 15. HM. 17. CM. 18. Aha. 19. Scape. 21. HH. 22. Hindu. 24. Tars. 26. Hartley. 28. Ike. 29. Jarp. 30. Coca. 31. Data. 32. PR. 33. Kn. 34. Anele. 36. Testy. 39. As. 40. Tot. 42. To. 43. Ham. 45. Acro. 46. Ramanathan.

Down: 2. Noah. 3. OTS. 4. Na. 6. Do. 7. Vim. 8. Id. 9. Lakh. 11. JHC. 13. Batticotta. 14. Patricks. 16. Mahajana. 17. Central. 19. SM. 20. Pirates. 21. Hue. 23. DLP. 25. Skantha. 27. Yarlton. 31. DA. 35. Etch. 37. EO. 38. Yam. 41. Ora. 44. Ma. 45. At.

No winner.

Continued from page 18

blunted by serious fights within the Janata Dal party.

Satish Sharma's strong victory in Amethi, despite earlier reports of his campaign failing, is significant. Sharma has virtually admitted that he is keeping the seat warm for the Gandhis. So even if Rao can take some solace from Sonia Gandhi's refusal to enter politics just as yet, it is not something he can take for granted. Sharma and other Congress leaders close to the Gandhi family are expected to counter any attempts to jettison Rajiv Gandhi's legacy. Some political observers also speculate that Sharma could be given a ministerial position in order to keep this group in good humour.

Average Performances in Assembly

In the assembly by-elections for 56 seats in 13 states, the Congress performance was average. When results of 45 seats were declared, Congress won 14 seats but none of them in Uttar Pradesh, India's most politically decisive state which is currently under a BJP administration. The BJP continued with its strong showing in Uttar Pradesh winning 10 of its 15 seats in that state. This could be owing to its decision to acquire lands around the disputed Babri mosque as a first step to construct a temple of Lord Ram at Ayodhya.

The impact of the outcome of the by-elections on the Rao government's stability still remains to be seen. Given India's quirky politics nothing can be said based on the election results. But Rao has used the argument of the impact of frequent mid-term polls on the country's economy. At a rally on Nov.13 Rao said holding mid-term elections affected the economy. He said one general election costs Rs. 12 billion (about $500 million). He said the 'present sorry state of the economy' showed how elections drain the economy. He said the people should see to it that whichever party formed the government gave stability. He even cited the Indian Constitution which he said called for general elections every five years.

For the time being, Rao appeared well in control, but only till the next crisis.

– India Abroad.

Continued from page 12

to power. He recalled how the Centre had helped to set up armed camps for Tamil militants of all hues when they sought refuge in Tamil Nadu soon after the ethnic crisis exploded in July 1983, and how the regime headed by M.G. Ramachandran went out of the way in pleasing the extremists to the extent of giving Rs.4 crores to the LTTE on one day.

Mr. Karunanidhi also dismissed the view that the Rajiv Gandhi assassination could have been averted if the Padmanabha killers had been nabbed. He felt on the other hand that if only the Centre and the former regime in the State had refrained from giving arms to the LTTE militants the tragic death of the former Prime Minister could have been avoided.

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MATRIMONIAL

Jaffna Hindu *professional parents educated in UK and USA seek professionally qualified bride, 25 – 30, from comparable family background, for their son, 30, tall, handsome, electrical engineer, B.Sc., MBA (nearing completion), proceeding to Ph.D., Toronto, Canada. Details M 540 c/o Tamil Times.*

Jaffna Hindu Engineer, *Australian citizen, seeks partner for qualified accountant brother, 29, in good employment in U.K. Send horoscope, details. M 541 c/o Tamil Times.*

Jaffna Hindu *seeks partner for fair, attractive daughter, 23, following accountancy course. Send horoscope, details. M 542 c/o Tamil Times.*

Jaffna Catholic *seeks partner for sister, 40, pretty, looks much younger, secretary, innocent divorcee, no children. M 543 c/o Tamil Times.*

Jaffna Hindu brother *seeks partner for sister, fair, pretty, 30, 5'4", in employment in London. Send details, horoscope. M 544 c/o Tamil Times.*

Aunt *seeks for attractive niece, 25, youngest of four with permanent Australian resident status, (holder of Diploma in Computing and graduate in Physics), suitable Tamil bridegroom. Religion immaterial. M 545 c/o Tamil Times.*

Jaffna Hindu parents *seek qualified partner for civil engineer daughter, 35, Australian permanent resident, project engineer, Sydney. Send horoscope details. M 546 c/o Tamil Times.*

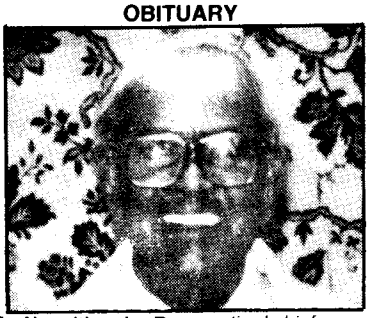
WEDDING BELLS

We congratulate the following couple on their recent wedding.

Prakash *son of Dr. V. Thuraisamy and the late Mrs. Yogaranee Thuraisamy of 97 Pine Street, Wharton, New Jersey, USA and* **Bharathi** *daughter of Dr. & Mrs. T. Upendran of 265/3A R.A. de Mel Mawatha, Colombo 3 on 7.12.91 at the Banquet Hall, Hotel Ceylon Intercontinental, Colombo.*

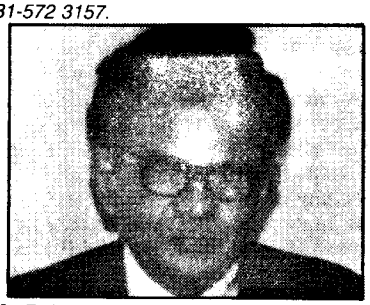
Tamil Times wishes all its readers, contributors and wellwishers a very Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

OBITUARY



Mr. Nannithamby Rasa, *retired chief executive clerk, Sri Lankan Railways, Ratmalana; beloved husband of Sountharammal; father of Rajeswaran, Rajendra (U.K.), Dr. Rajanayagam (USA), Rajasooriar, Dr. Sri Ranjani Rajayogeswaran, Pushparanjini, Rajamanoharan (all of U.K.) and Mrs. Jayaranjini Mahendran (Singapore) passed away peacefully in Singapore on 1.12.91 and was cremated on 5th December. The members of his family thank all friends and relatives for their messages of sympathy, flowers and assistance in several ways at this time of grief. They regret their inability to thank them individually. – 67 Winchester Close, Thorley Park, Bishop Stortford, Herts. Tel: 0279 504186.*

Mr. Durairajah Shanthikumar *(40), beloved husband of Ananthi; loving father of Kisho, Nirosh, Gajan and Parkavi; son of the late Mr. Durairajah, former Mayor of Jaffna and Mrs. Nageswary Durairajah; brother of Chandra Sarvaloganayagam, Indra Kathirgamanathan (both of London), Vasantha Sabaratnam (USA), Skandakumar (Australia), Jeyakumar (Sri Lanka), Manohari Pulendran, State Minister of Education (Sri Lanka) and Nandakumar (Toronto) passed away peacefully after a short illness on 25.11.91 and was cremated in Colombo on 27th November – 33 Vicarage Farm Road, Hounslow, Middx. U.K. Tel: 081-572 3157.*



Mr. Rajah Sittambalam, *dearly beloved husband of Thevy (Dr. Miss Hoole); son of the late Mr. & Mrs. K.A. Sittambalam of Vaddukoddai; son-in-law of the late Mr. Edwin Thambirajah Hoole and the late Mrs. Kanagam Hoole; loving brother of the late Mr. Johnson Muthiah Sittambalam, Mrs. Joseline Hoole (Australia) and Mrs. Roseline Hudson Selvarajah (Australia) passed away peacefully on 4.12.91 in Alperton, Middlesex, U.K. Funeral took place on 11.12.91 – 27 Mount Pleasant. Alperton, Middx., HA0 1UA.*

Mr. Sinnappu Thambydurai *(84), Retired District Judge, Sri Lanka of Thirunelvely North, Jaffna; husband of the late Maruthapiraveekavalli; beloved father of Mrs. Gnanal Gulendran (USA), Mrs. Sounthal Shanmugarajah (Jaffna), Anandakumaraswamy (London), Mrs. Kanagal Sithambaranathan, Dr.(Mrs.) Krishnal Jeyarajasingam (both of Jaffna), Muthukumarasamy (USA), Mrs. Parvatha Tharmalingam (Canada) and Mrs. Ruba Surendran (Jaffna); brother of the late Dr. Sivagnanam (Malaysia), late Mr. S.V. Sundram (Malaysia), late Mrs. Kanagamma Subramaniam (Jaffna) and Mrs. Nagamma Kanagasabai (Jaffna) passed away in Thirunelvely, Jaffna on 2.12.91 – 78 Amhurst Gardens, Isleworth, Middx. TW7 6AJ. U.K. Tel: 081-560 8346.*

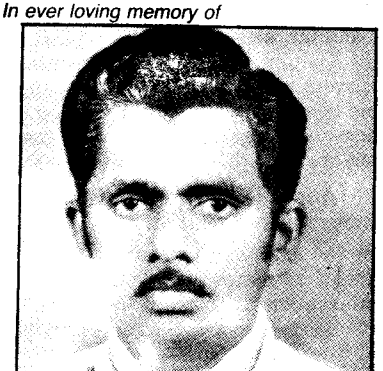
IN MEMORIAM

Dr. T. Thambyahpillai *(Research Fellow, Imperial College, London) who passed away on December 4, 1984.*

Gradually, the years glide by,
But we still remember you.
The photos fade more everyday,
But the memories are almost new.
You were so great, so kind and gentle,
Those qualities are found in few.
Though it is now seven years
The tears will never cease to flow.

So sadly missed and dearly loved by his wife and children: Meenalosani, Sivakamasunthari and Shiyamalanayagi.

In ever loving memory of



the late **Naavalar Kanapathipillai Navasothy,** *born, 2.4.1941 Died: 4.1.1990, Tamil scholar of international repute, teacher, au-*

thor, journalist, publisher, broadcaster, dynamic orator, a true Tamilian who worked steadfastly for the unity, prosperity and betterment of Tamils all over the world, on the second anniversary of his passing away.

Fondly remembered and sadly missed by his mother Parameswary Kanapathipillai; beloved wife Ruparanee; loving children Manivannan, Vathani and Yalini; brothers Sathyamoorthy, Raveenthiran, Kanakeswaran, Vaganthakumaran; sister Eeswary Shanmugapalan; relatives, friends, students and admirers – 45 Avarn Road, London SW17 9HR. Tel: 081-767 2585.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

December 21 *6.00pm Carol Service at South London Tamil Church, St. Nicola's Church, Church Lane, London SW17.*

Dec. 31 *8.30pm Prayer for peace in Sri Lanka & 11.30pm Watch Night Service.*

January 4 *Amavasai. 6.00pm Heroes Day. Cultural Variety Entertainment at Waltham Forest Assembly Hall. Admission free.*

Jan. 9 *Chathurthi.*

Jan. 10 *7.45pm &* **Jan 12** *6.00pm Bhavan's Founder's day celebrations with Music, Dance, Drama & Yoga at Bhavan Centre, 4A Castletown Road, London W14. All welcome.*

Jan. 15 *Thai Pongal.*

Jan. 16 *Ekathasi.*

Jan. 18 *5.30pm Lecture on Mahabharata by Mathoor Krishnamoorthy at Bhavan Centre, 4A Castletown Road, London W14. All welcome.*

Jan. 19 *Full Moon.*

Jan. 20 *Thai Poosam.*

Jan. 25 *Academy of Fine Arts, London in association with G-Com computers presents Thamilar Thiru Naal at Brent Town Hall, Forty Lane, Wembley, Middx. Admission Free.*

Shiva-Vishnu Temple in Melbourne

A magnificent building which will accommodate Shiva, Vishnu, Ganesh, Subramaniam, Ambal and other deities associated with Hindu Worship is taking shape at Carrum Downs, a suburb of Melbourne. This venture is being undertaken by the Hindu Society of Victoria (Aust.).

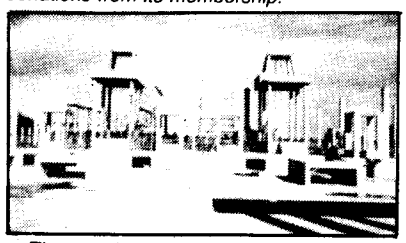
Early in 1982, a small group of dedicated Hindus, living in Melbourne, felt the need for a regular place of worship for the increasing number of Hindus among the recent migrants to Australia, and formed the Hindu Society of Victoria (Aust.) Inc. on 21st June, 1984. The Society has now over 1200 members, consisting of Hindus originating from India, Sri Lanka, Malaysia, Singapore, Fiji, South Africa and other parts of the world.

In 1985, the society purchased 14.25 acres of land at Carrum Downs, at a cost of $75,000. The Architectural and Engineering talent, available among its own members, was harnessed to plan out a suitable building and an eminent Temple architect (Sthapati) from India was commissioned to finalise the technical details for the Shrines, Gopurams and the final orientation of the components to conform to traditional Hindu requirements.

The local Authority was very enthusiastic about the proposal and had no hesitation in granting permission for the project. The building, with its tall Gopurams, will adorn the landscape of Melbourne.

The building with a floor area of about 1400 square metres (42 x 34m) will have two Raja Gopurams at the entrance rising to a height of 13 metres. Seventeen shrines to house the deities will be accommodated within the main building, while an additional Ganesha shrine will also be built at the entrance. Two main shrines (Shriva and Vishnu) with Gopurams rising to a height of 11 metres will project about 4 metres over the roof.

The first stage has been completed, the concrete floor, foundations for the Gopurams and all columns are in place and services like water and electricity have been provided. The Society has spent about $400,000 utilising donations from its membership.



The remaining stages of the project programmed will cost a further $800,000. Assistance from the Hindu public would help in the realisation of the objectives of the Hindus in Victoria. Donations are invited by the Hindu Society of Victoria, 2 Dayan Drive, Wantirna South, Vic. 3152, Australia and will be gratefully acknowledged.

Bharatha Natyam Contest in USA

The New York Tamil Sangam organised an International Bharatha Natyam Contest on 7th September 1991 at Livingston High School Auditorium, New Jersey, USA. The sixteen finalists were chosen directly from a large pool of applicants on the strength of their dance resumé and references. The contestants were from USA, Canada and U.K. and a panel of seven judges decided on the winner who received the Balasaraswati Award for Excellence in Dance which included an engraved plaque and $500. The runner-up, **Natasha Bakht** *from Ontario, Canada is a student of Menaka Takkar. The second runner-up,* **Zarina Jackson** *from New York is a student of Hema Rajagopalan of Chicago. The third runner-up,* **Vidya Kuganathan** *from Catford, U.K. is a student of Adyar Lakshman's dance school in Madras. Their pictures appear below.*

Vidya

Aparna

Zarina

Natasha

British Columbian Tamils Celebrate Saraswathy Pooja

Tamil families and their friends living in the Greater Vancouver area held the annual Saraswathy Pooja on 13.10.91 at Kerrisdale Community Centre situated in West Vancouver. After the traditional pooja and devotional songs, a group of children trained by Mrs. Sasikala Manamohan danced to the music of 'Oodi Vilayadu Paapa'. Individual vocal items were rendered by Mrs. Chitra Ravichandran and Anthony Gajendrakopan.

There was a discussion on the aims and objects of the association. Mr. Svend Robinson, M.P. and Opposition spokesman on International Affairs was present and spoke about his intended visit to Sri Lanka with a delegation organised by the Anglican Church of Canada in the second week of January 1992. He emphasised that he supported the aspirations of the Sri Lankan Tamils and expressed his keen interest to visit the war torn areas of north and east Sri Lanka.

Sivakamasunthary – Bharatha Natya Arangetram

The Forum Theatre in Lemsford Road, Hatfield, Hertfordshire in close vicinity to the brand new shopping complex – 'GALLERIA' – announced in red bold letters on its illuminated white screen outside, the Bharatha Natya Arangetram of Sivakamasunthary Kumaravel. The auditorium unlike those in London was compact and beautifully arranged.

Sivakamasunthary a student of Bishops Hatfield Girls School, winner of the Duke of Edinburgh Golden Award for First Aid, presented by the Duke of Edinburgh himself in 1990 – completed her advanced level and went to Madras for further training in Bharatha Natyam.

Her Guru 'Nritta Periyar' Sri J. Venkatachalapathi an exponent in Bharatha Natyam and Kuchipudi was personally present to conduct the Nattuvangam. Sri J. Venkatachalapathi served as a Lecturer in Dance for more than 15 years with Srimathi Rukmani Arundele at the Kalakshetra Institute of Dance in Madras. He continues to perform on stage and television and has travelled widely. His Kuchipudi dance pose appeared on an Indian Postal Stamp in 1975. Sri J. Venkatachalapathi was accompanied by his team of musicians from India – Sri Aravindakshan in vocal, and Sri Kesavan in Mirudangam.

After the Ghanapathy Slokam Sivakamasunthary did the Natarajanjali and Allaripu to the all male vocal group singing an ancient devotional song from the scriptures – 'Ulahellam Unarnthu Othatku Ariyavan'. Nattuvangam and all male singing was an in-

teresting change. This was followed by the Jathiswaram, a Sabtham on Sri Krishna ('Ayar Seriyar') and a century old Varnam (Rupamujuchi) composed by Muthusamy Theedchthar on God Shiva enshrined in Thiruvaroor as Thiyagarajan.

Sivakamasunthary performed seven pieces in her Arangetram, four during the first half, and three during the latter half compared to ten or twelve items in some Arangetrams. During the second half she presented Natanam Aadinar, a Keerthanam on Lord Natarajar and a Thulasidasar Bajan on God Rama. The Thillana was in Bilahari – Adi. All the seven items were very well received and appreciated by the audience. The danceuse was confident on stage and presented the items with ease. Credit of course goes to the dancer, her Guru who choreographed the performance and the accompanying artistes from India. It was a very pleasant September evening indeed in Hatfield Hertfordshire.

Wimal Sockanathan.

A Debut With a Difference

Sunday, 1st September 1991 was a great day for those who thronged the newly acquired hall of London Sri Murugan Temple in Eastham, London. They had a glimpse of Nadabrahman through the deft, almost magical display of finger techniques by master **Arvind Jayan** whose violin 'Samarpanam' was presented at the premises.

I had noted the special talent of young Arvind who had secured, the first prize for violin and the coveted Mummurthigal prize at the London Music Circle competitions. But the display of talent that day marked a great stride even from that level, thanks to the painstaking training provided by his mother-cum-Guru, Dr. Lakshmi Jayan and the good fortune Arvind had in getting the maestro Lalgudi Jayaraman to impart him the highly admired 'Lalgudi' techniques. The extent to which the latter process had taken roots in Arvind was echoed in the special reference made by the Chief Guest Shri Tanjore S. Kalyanaraman on the occasion.

Starting the concert with composer Vadivelu's Varnam in Kamboji Ragam, Arvind went on to play Sri Maha Ganapathim by Mysore Maharaja, bringing out the full majesty of Atana Ragam. The next three Kritis handled by him – Dudugugala by Saint Thyagaraja, Smaramyaham by Muthuswamy Dikshithar and Marivere by Shyama Sastrigal typified the saying that the music of Thyagaraja is the simplest to imbibe, like eating grapes, that of Dikshithar, like peeling a banana and eating it and that of Shyamam Sastrigal, like breaking a coconut and drinking its nectar. Arvind did show an adequate prowess in bringing out the full bhava in all the songs. The next piece Ramakathasudha where he touched great heights, portraying the delectable nuances and intricacies of Madhyamavathi Ragam in the alapana as well as the following Saramathi Krithi Mokshamugalatha enraptured the discerning audience through a strong mesmerising 'Lalgudi' touch.

The **piece de resistance** of the programme was the Ragam, Thanam, Pallavi in Ragam Karaharapriya which was beautifully rendered, with the Pallavi revealing a masterly control of Kanda Jathi Thriputa Thalam. The meanderings through other Ragams, particularly Saveri and Mohanam in the Swaram were very pleasing to the ears.

The 'Thukkada' pieces which followed were rendered with equal ease, Papanasam Sivan's composition Enna Thavan Seydanai bringing out the quintessence of Kapi Ragam. The Western Note which was slotted in, showed another dimension of Arvind's talents. The concert concluded with the Thilang Thillana composed by Lalgudi Jayaraman, played in a way which would have pleased the maestro himself.

Another memorable aspect of the Samarpanam was that the Mridangam accompaniment was by Mridangam wizard Guruvayur Dorai who had flown all the way from Madras to bless young Arvind. Kumari Bharathy Ramgopal played the Thampura and Kumari Aparna Sharma did the compering.

P.P. Kanthan.

Venkatachalapathy Delights

Nirtha Periyar Sri J. Venkatachalapathy well known exponent in Bharatha natyam and Kuchipudi was in London recently to choreograph a dance Arangetram. During the same week Indian National Television Door Darshan screened a special half an hour dance programme performed by him. Sri J. Venkatachalapathy personally performed in two fundraising events one for the Tamil Orphans Trust of UK, and the other for The League of Friends of the University of Jaffna. A radio interview with him by Mr. Wimal Sockanathan was also broadcast by the BBC World Service programme 'Tamil Osai'.

Sri J. Venkatachalapathy was a lecturer in Kalakshetra Madras for over fifteen years under Smt Rukmani Devi and has been conferred several titles by various Organisations. His portrait performing Kuchipudi appeared in a Postal Stamp released by the Government of India.

In the picture Sri J. Venkatachalapathy appears at the Winston Churchill Hall Ruislip Middlesex with Shenika Shakespeare of the Shakespeare School of Oriental Dancing.

Bharata Natyam & Kuchipudi in Denmark

Mr. Johansen of Herning City Council, honouring the artistes

Mrs. Vijayambigai Indrakumar and her 10-year-old daughter, **Venothini,** from England, concluded their recent successful dance tour of Northern Denmark with a brilliant performance of Bharata Natyam and Kuchipudi at Herning City. Their dance recital was the climax of a two day Cultural Festival organised by the Danish Tamil Friendship Asociation with funding from the Herning City Council, with the 'Herning Folkeblad' newspaper carrying a 4-column colour photograph of Vijayambigai.

The programme was attended by Mr. Thorbjorn Lorrentzen, Chairman, Danish Tamil Friendship Association, Mr. Hilmer Solund, Mayor of Herning City Council and Mr. Troels Johansen, Chairman of the Social Committee of Herning City Council and Chairman of the Education Committee of the Social Democratic Party. The latter compered the programme in Danish. A capacity crowd of Danes and expatriate Tamils saw the 3-hour scintillating performance by the mother and daughter duo who kept the crowds enthralled.

Vijayambigai and Venothini, daughter and shishya, reminded the expatriate Sri Lankan Tamils living in Denmark that nothing is lost, and even in the face of adversity, we could and should keep our cultural traditions going and also scale new heights. Where there is a will, there surely is a way.

T. Selvakumar,

Herning, Denmark.

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